1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

enter the native town. In the town as it presents itself to the eyes of the visitor there are but few traces of modern influence. There are the modern roads, metalled, with stone parapets and bridges of concrete. But the houses which line the streets are still the same century-old Nupe houses: the big, naked wall enclosing the compound and, hidden behind it, the array of small thatched huts. As in the village, the compound wall opens upon the street in the *katamba*, the gateway or entrance-hall of the Nupe house. Its style and lay-out and the state it is in indicate better than anything else the status and position of the people who live there. There are the round gateways of the wealthy, some painted black, some in gay colours, with ornaments worked in relief into the clay, and the roomy gateways of the royal princes, with window recesses, and pillars and buttresses to support the high-gabled roof. Some *katamba* have raised platforms in front of the door, carefully levelled, and stained with the juice of the locust-bean which gives them the appearance of smooth asphalt. Others have coloured earthenware plates inlaid in the clay of the wall; others show, worked in relief, figures and emblems which took the builder's fancy or which are to indicate the owner's profession, such as the likeness of the wooden writing slate—the 'trade-sign' of the learned Koran-teacher. And then there are the naked, sober *katamba* of the simple craftsman or farmer, and the dilapidated, neglected, and roofless entrance huts of the poor. *Katamba* follows *katamba*, house follows house, as we walk along the road. Side-streets branch off, winding between the compounds, a maze of small streets and paths, which are often just wide enough for a man on horseback to pass through. Here and there the walls recede and give room to an open square with a few trees, a little grass or a patch of cultivated ground, where goats and sheep graze, children play, and a few men, sitting in the shade, enjoy the hours of leisure.

We pass a blacksmiths' quarter, easily known by the open forges with their many doors and small triangular windows all round the walls. A little off the road live weavers and bead-makers. The road opens into a large square. To the right is a market, one of the three big day-markets of Bida, noisy and crowded with people who are buying and selling: foodstuffs, firewood, cloth, small pots. To the left, occupying one whole front of the square, is the residence of the Masaba dynasty. Two small bronze cannons formerly flanked the entrance-hall as symbol of the royal might. In the centre of the square stands a small throne hall; it used to be a pretty building, with painted and decorated pillars all round. But to-day, only a year since the death of the last *Etsu* from this house, it is already in a state of disrepair and neglect which symbolizes, more convincingly even than the disappearance of the bronze cannons, the passing of royal power. Houses of nobility and high office-holders occupy the other sides of the square. Walking on, past the long wall of the royal residence, we come to the street of the brass- and silversmiths. At all hours of the day their forges are busy, but not too busy to greet you with a little flourish of hammering on their anvils. Their womenfolk are sitting outside the huts with baskets full of brass- and silverware in front of them, offering the products of the street to those who pass by.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

623 many elders. No 'house' may be excluded from the share-out of village offices, nor may one 'house' 'own' more than one title—at least not in theory. The senior members of the house sometimes accompany their family head to the meetings of the council in the chief's house. Or if an elder is himself too old, or an invalid, a younger relative may do his work for him; but there would not as a rule be two holders of a *nūsa* rank in the same house.[1] These rules, however, are not, in fact cannot be, rigid. A powerful chief may appoint a friend or favourite to a rank to which he would not normally be entitled, or refuse a rank to the legitimate claimant for reasons of private enmity or jealousy; an immigrant group may demand that a rank be conferred on its head as a confirmation of established citizenship; or an expanding family may claim additional titles for its members. New ranks may thus be created, new titles introduced, which do not correspond to the traditional system of village ranks.[2] On the other hand, titles may disappear with the family in which they were vested or with the special profession to which they referred. The title *Ndace*, Father of Hunting, originally a title common everywhere in Nupe, is missing to-day in many villages; the titles *Etsu Dzā*, Head of the Drummers, and *Maji Tswata*, Master of the Blacksmiths, have disappeared here and there where strangers (Hausa) have taken over the work of drumming and smithing and have disorganized this originally family-owned profession.

The equation: so many houses, so many titles, may also be upset (at least temporarily) by the opposite trend: in an expanding family group sections may split off from the main body, and build themselves a new house, without being awarded a separate rank. The *tunga* very rarely 'owns' a *nūsa* rank. Founded by young people, it usually keeps its status of a 'junior branch' even in subsequent generations. However, a son or younger brother may be called to succeed the family head in the village and leave the *tunga* to assume his inheritance and position in the 'town'.[3]

623 564 Thus the institution of ranks of elders has two aspects: one is the official recognition, by the community at large, of the headship of certain individuals over the component groups of the community—kinship groups and 'houses'—a headship which implies both a certain moral control and control of the economic resources of the group; and the other the division of the political executive of the village between a number of selected individuals. The closer examination of the first aspect belongs to the chapters on kinship, land-tenure, and economics. We are concerned here more especially with the second aspect. But we shall see that the two are closely intertwined. The acceptance of a family head into the village executive enhances the position of authority which he normally occupies in his kinship group; but it signifies at the same time that he may be called upon to use this moral authority in the service of the village at large. Appointment to a village rank also strengthens the measure of

[1] Thus an old, blind *nūsa* in Jebba no longer took part in the meetings of the village elders. But no successor was appointed until his death.

[2] In Mokwa, for example, the new title *Maji Koshagba* (lit. Master of Grave Digging) was conferred on the head of a Hausa family which had settled there during the Fulani wars.

[3] See p. 37.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

623 554 economic control which he exercises, by granting him access to special economic resources (above all, fruit-bearing trees) unattainable to the other members of his group. Thus supported, the titled family head is qualified to assume his double role, as official agent of the community at large and as representative of his group *vis-à-vis* the village community.

The relation between the two roles and their relative preponderance varies with the rank which an elder may attain. For the *nũsa* ranks are not of equal order. They are defined by strict order of precedence, and there is never any doubt which title ranks higher or lower. The measure of political responsibility closely corresponds to the place in the scale of village ranks. In some villages we even find a formal distinction between the 'great' and 'small' ranks, the former three or (more often) four in number, forming as it were the 'inner council'. Where the village is arranged in a number of separate large clusters of compounds (*ɔs* in Doko, Kutigi, or Sakpe), the distinction between 'great' and 'small' ranks also implies a distinction between headship over the whole cluster of compounds, the *efu*, and headship over single compounds or 'houses' only.[1] The professional ranks of blacksmiths and drummers are always at the bottom of the list of village ranks. The political importance of the rank of the Head of the Hunters and of the ranks which are combined with priestly offices differs in different communities.

623 It would be wrong to think of the village council of elders as of an elaborate, rigidly formalized, instrument of government. The full council is rarely summoned except on important occasions, such as the election of a chief, or the visit of the *Etsu* and his delegates or the District Officer. The normal routine work of village government is carried on by the chief and his 'inner council' of two or three elders of highest rank. And here again we have no formal appointed assembly, but rather casual meetings in the houses of the chief or of one of the elders, at which current questions are discussed and the necessary decisions taken. If more elders have to be consulted or instructed, a messenger will be sent to their houses, or they will call individually at the house of the chief or the head *nũsa*. If in the case of the *nũsaži* of high rank their position of authority transcends the component groups to the headship of which they have risen in virtue of their kinship position, this latter aspect preponderates in the case of the *nũsaži* of lesser rank who are excluded from the 'inner council'. They are executive organs of the village in the indirect sense of intermediaries through whom decisions of the chief and the leading elders reach the various kinship and local groups, and through whom, in turn, these groups can voice claims and interests so far as they call for action on the part of the community.

623 554 184 The graded scale of village ranks does not command an unequivocal corresponding system of appointment and succession. Succession to the lowest, professional, ranks is invariably hereditary. So is succession to the priestly ranks or the ranks linked with a priestly office: the secret

[801] [1] In eastern Nupe, especially among Dibo and Beni, the number four plays an important part in the arrangement of *efu* as well as in the order of ranks. We find four *efu* and four ranks, or four head ranks and four secondary ranks, or four ranks plus the chief's rank.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

623 554 184

of the ritual office remains vested in one family group. But succession to the other ranks involves a certain ambiguous situation. Only a few communities have worked out the principle of precedence consistently, evolving a system of promotion from lower to higher rank—Jebba Island and Mokwa are examples. In these communities every vacancy is made an occasion for a reshuffle of the ranks. A *nūsa* whose seniority and standing qualify him for the rank that has fallen vacant is appointed, his own rank going to another *nūsa* deserving promotion, and so forth, till finally one of the lowest ranks becomes vacant, which is then duly bestowed on a fitting, as yet untitled, candidate. But in other communities all promotion from one rank to another is excluded, the titles in almost caste-like rigidity remain linked with 'houses', and a man can claim only this one title whether or not it is one for which his age, experience, and personality would qualify him.[1] The people are themselves well aware of this ambiguity. It is overcome, in practice, in various ways. First, the appointment to the rank which has fallen vacant may be postponed till the candidate has reached the age and gained the status appropriate to the rank; a 'young man' of Kutigi (he was about 45) had been waiting for ten years for the title which his father's brother had held before and which had been 'reserved' for him; every time I saw him and asked how his affair stood, he replied with the same words: *n'wa ke degi*, 'just a little longer'. Or one may introduce new titles, intermediary ranks, by which device the rigid order of traditional ranks is circumvented. Finally, hereditary succession in Nupe is never understood in the narrow sense of a quasi-automatic appointment. Often it is a selection from a number of candidates of suitable seniority—younger brothers or eldest sons (in the classificatory sense) of the deceased. Though seniority counts above all, old age and debility will disable a prospective successor to family headship. Apart from seniority, other attributes are also essential: good reputation, skill and experience as farmer, a friendly temper, and good health; a leper or a man suffering from elephantiasis or blindness is ineligible; so is a complete invalid. But so long as his impediment (e.g. a short leg, a crooked arm) does not interfere with his work on the land and his ability to move about, it does not matter. The main attribute is *ánkali*—intelligence. In Kutigi a serious quarrel had broken out between the chief and some of his elders who refused to give their consent to the appointment to a high rank of a man whom they considered 'to have no brains'.

623

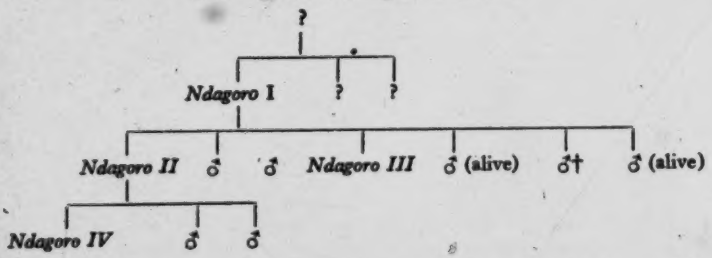
The following genealogy illustrates the succession to the position of a certain titled family head, the *Ndagoro* of Mokwa. We

[1] An interesting transition from hereditary ranks to ranks of the promotion type has evolved in Faže, a village in Ebe country. Only recently the former system of hereditary ranks was replaced in this village by a promotion system, the depopulation of the village in the Fulani wars having made this step necessary; for some of the families in which the most important ranks had been vested had died out, and only promotion from lower to higher ranks could prevent this untoward vacancy. This local development cannot, for various reasons, be taken as affording the explanation of the origin of the promotion system of *nūsa* ranks in Nupe. But it clearly shows that the people are aware of the inherent conflict between the rank system based on precedence and the strict rule of hereditary succession.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

observe the general scheme of Nupe inheritance, one generation being run through before the next generation is admitted to the succession; but we notice also that the progress of succession left out two men of the older generation.

Genealogy of the *Ndagoro* of Mokwa



The same qualifications would also make a stranger who has settled for some time in a Nupe village eligible for a higher or lower *nūsa* rank. But 'good reputation' would be understood according to local standards, which may not be the standards of the applicant. A lute-player in Doko, who had been living there for some twenty years, a fairly prosperous and well-liked man, still went without title. Lute-playing, though appreciated in Bida, was not in the eyes of the villagers a respectable profession. Had he been a farmer, or even a drummer, he would have been awarded a title long before.

If a 'new man' desires to be granted a title he broaches the subject first with one of the titled *nūsa* with whom he is intimate; the latter will bring it before chief and council of elders, who will then discuss the question at their leisure. If, on the other hand, a rank falls vacant, especially one of the higher ranks, the official discussions will start at once, and all the men of the village will be talking about it and surmising likely successors. In the lowest ranks succession is a simple matter. In hereditary ranks, particularly in small families, the decision may also take but little time. When the *Ejukó* of Jebba Island—the hereditary Keeper of the Chain of Tsoede—died, his successor was known a week after his death, and the title was conferred upon him within a month. But sometimes the appointment of a successor is a serious and long-drawn-out business, and often enough, as we have seen, feuds may break out over the appointment of the most suitable candidate. Discussion follows discussion, often for weeks and months, especially if it happens to be the rainy season when everybody is busy and can spare only an evening or two in the week. The elders meet first, in small groups, in their own houses; later when the discussion has reached a more advanced stage they meet in the house of the *nūsa* of highest rank and finally in the house of the chief. As always in meetings of this kind the assembly gathers in the entrance hut of the house; the younger men sit near the outer door, the elder men on the inner side of the hut. They are rarely given anything to eat or drink except perhaps a few kola-nuts in the house of the chief.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

I

Rank System from Mokwa (Promotion Type)

623
554
184

Rank order	*Title*	*Office*	*Locality ('efu' or 'eni')*	*Succession*	*Insignia, magic, &c.*	*Remarks*
1	*Lile*	Chief	Efugbo or *efu* Lile	Promotion	..	Present chief was promoted to chieftainship from rank *Sarkin Zongu*
2	*Shaba Lile*	..	Gunnuba (so called because *gunnu* priest lives here)	,,	..	Title introduced under Fulani influence; replaced original title *Sojeko*.
3	*Ndeshi* (Sheshi)	'King-maker'	Ilancita	Hereditary	Sacred chain, priesthood of Tsoede	Title *Ndeshi* corresponds to *Ndezi*, 'Father of the Town'.
3a	*Guye*	Successor to 3	Etisheshi and Korofugi	Hereditary in family of *Ndeshi*[1]	..	..
3b	*Tswashe*	Successor to 3a	Ntaci	As 3a	..	..
4	*Sdmava*	..	Gbaye and Yafu	Promotion	..	Was promoted to present rank from *Tsonkwa*.
5	*Ndagoro*	..	Goro	,,	..	..
6	*Maji Kotkgbe*	..	Kpege	,,	..	Newly introduced rank.
7	*Tsonkwa* (*Tswoa*)	..	*eni* Ndahogi	,,	..	..
8	*Maji Bagidi*	..	Ilancita	,,	..	..
9	*Maji Dende*	..	,,	,,	..	..
10	*Maji wya Kota*	..	Goro	,,	..	..
11	*Maji Guye*	..	Kpege	,,	..	..
12	*Maji Tswaci*	Head of Blacksmiths	Tswata	Hereditary	..	..
13	*Etsu Dzi*	Head of Drummers	*eni* Dzezi	,,	..	..
13a	*Shaba Dzi*	Successor to 13	*eni* Dzezi	Hereditary in house of *Etsu Dzi*[2]	..	..
•	*Wangwa*	..	*efu* Wangwa	..	..	This rank no longer exists. The position of the head of the *efu* has fallen, quasi-unofficially, to the *Liman*, the Mohammedan priest, who is not yet, however, officially admitted into the village council.

[1] These secondary ranks defining succession to the hereditary rank of 'king-maker' I have found only in Mokwa. The *Sheshi*, *Guye*, and *Tswashe* regard each other as elder and younger brothers respectively. I was told that originally the office of *Sheshi* was inherited matrilineally, and that this is the explanation why it has become divided between three kinship sections living in different *efu*. Though this explanation is, logically, incorrect, and although these three offices have actually been inherited in paternal line since the people can remember, the fact remains that the three groups which succeed each other in rotation are vaguely thought of as of matrilineal origin. The aloofness from the other village ranks which characterizes the office of the 'king-maker' is thus further enhanced by the different conception of succession.

[2] Secondary professional ranks of this kind are found also in other craftsmen groups, e.g. blacksmiths. Sometimes there exists also a third rank of this order, with the title *Kpota*. This organization of craftsmen ranks will be discussed in Chapter XIV.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

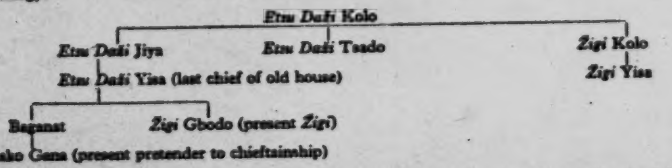
II

Rank System from Doko (Hereditary Type)

623
554
184

Rank order	*Title*	*Office*	*Locality ('efu')*	*Succession*	*Insigma, magic, &c.*	*Remarks*
1	*Etsu Dafi*	Chief	Dafi	Hereditary	Sacred bangles, chief's ritual	*Zigi* (priest) is of chief's family.[1]
2	*Shaba*	..	In *tunga*	A relation of chief, promoted to present rank from *Lile* at death of late *Shaba*, 1935	..	Newly introduced title, copied from Bida ranks.
3	*Lile*	Formerly 'Heir Presumptive'	Dafi	Present holder chief's younger brother	..	..
4	*Kpotii*	..	,,	Present holder chief's elder brother (died 1936)	..	Newly introduced title, copied from Bida.
5	*Maki*	..	,,	Tentatively introduced (see p. 56)	..	As 2 and 4
6	*Ndefie*	..	Edokó	Hereditary in one 'house'	..	..
7	*Daoko*	..	Takogi	,,	..	..
8	*Baba*	..	Kpacinsfu	,,	..	..
9	*Shabaafi*	..	Ndadofu	,,	..	..
10	*Bado*	..	Dafi	,,	..	..
11	*Zitsu Babi*	..	Edokó	,,	..	..
12	*Magi*	..	,,	,,	..	..
13	*Magi Egba* (or *Ndace*)	Head of Hunters	,,	,,	..	..

[1] The typical relationship between *Zitsu* and *Zigi*, chief and priest of the chief's ritual, as described above exists no longer, as the present chief comes from a new family. The relationship between chief and priest as it existed in the original chief's dynasty is shown in the attached genealogy.



of this: a young man, son of the late chief, but inexperienced, timid and unintelligent, had been put forward as candidate by the 'king-maker', himself a shrewd and keen man, when the Administration looked for a successor to the vacant chieftainship of Sakpe. (The young chief, whose rule not unnaturally proved a failure, was deposed after two years.) But such cases are rare. As a rule the division of secular and priestly office works out harmoniously. Only once did I find an open conflict; but it revealed, not a failure of the established system, but rather a departure from it, brought about by extraneous influences.

622
793

It was the case of the chiefs of Doko, to which I have already referred. Here the kinship bond between chief and priest, *Zitsu* and *Zigi*, had been dissolved when the new family succeeded to the chieftainship. The priest of the chief's ritual became, from the priestly partner in the two-fold office of chieftainship, an independent, and thus dangerous, agent. The descendant of the original chief's family, a young man, Ndakó Gana by name, used the spiritual power vested in his house as a weapon

622
793
578

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

chief's special income did not, normally, constitute an insurmountable economic barrier between himself and his subjects. This is further shown by the fact that the characteristic possessions of a chief—possession of things generally valued in the society—were not unattainable by others.

His surplus income the chief uses as follows: some of it he must devote to special expenditure attached to his office, the purchase of a goat or fowl for the annual sacrifices, or some other large contribution (larger than that of the other family heads) towards the cost of the village ceremonies. Occasional liberal presents to the elders, food, kola-nuts, beer, gowns are also indicated; a niggardly chief is much disliked. The larger part of his income the chief spends on himself, his family, and generally on things the possession of which are demanded by his status and prestige. Some chiefs, with a view to profit as well as prestige, have bought slaves or taken pawns. Every bigger chief possesses at least one horse. His dress is always of the more expensive kind—embroidered trousers, a turban, and an indigo-dyed gown, possibly an embroidered Bida robe. Many chiefs possess the beautifully carved staffs which are made by the craftsmen in the river valley and sold for sums up to two pounds. One or another chief owns an old flintlock gun, and some chiefs pride themselves on building bigger and more ornate houses than the majority of the people possess. Finally, as the most conspicuous symbol of economic advantage in this country of extremely high bride-price, two at least of the bigger chiefs I met had what among the Nupe peasants is considered a very large number of wives (5 or 6 as against the usual 1 or 2), and so had some of their sons and younger brothers.

Set against this the economic position of a well-to-do family head and rank-holder. He too used to own slaves or pawns. The higher rank-holders often possess large, imposing houses. They carry carved staffs, own a horse, turban and state gown, and a gun. Some of them may have three or four wives. With regard to the accoutrements of his office—the religious elements linked with chieftainship, its insignia and symbols of rank—the chief stands on a plane by himself; as regards things 'that money can buy', or liquid capital, he is placed only one step higher than his citizens of rank. The surplus capital which he derives from his office is not, as we can see, large enough to be turned into an effective instrument of political ambition.

Involved in this is the question how far the temporary economic benefits linked with the chief's office can be used so as to be turned into a lasting economic advantage, enjoyed by the descendants and the whole family of the chief. For the communities in which succession to chieftainship follows promotion or rotation the question answers itself: the surplus income vested in the chief's office is not sufficient, once acquired, to endow his whole 'house' permanently with economic superiority.[1] In

presided over by the *sûsa* ranks, and the smaller family groups (approximately 100 in number) with which we should have to reckon to-day.

[1] Here is a significant illustration: in Mokwa and Jebba, two villages of 'promotion type', the imposing houses of the late chiefs have fallen into disrepair; the descendants are no longer able to command the communal labour without which the upkeep of the large house is impossible.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

hereditary chieftainship, the accumulation of surplus renders such development more likely. But even here the existence of the special chief's cult, which imposes additional expenses on the chief (higher than in the case of cults to which he need only contribute his share), should tend to adjust more equitably the economic balance between chief and elders.[1]

However, we have other evidence to show that the chief's position, economically privileged though it may be, is not *meant* to lead to the formation of an essentially different, sharply separated, permanently privileged ruling class; evidence, in other words, to show that the political organization of the village is meant to preserve the social homogeneity of its community. This evidence lies in the rules of etiquette defining the behaviour of the people towards their chief. People everywhere show reverence to their chief: they kneel down by the door when entering his presence. Often there are raised platforms in the chief's entrance hut, near the door leading to the inner part of the house, on which he would sit, while the others are squatting on the ground in front of him. Or the chief would sit on a leopard skin or at least a cow-hide, while the others are assigned seats on grass-mats. The chief, finally, is addressed by special formulae of greeting reserved for his title. Yet again, this attitude of reverence represents only the highest grade of respect as it is shown similarly to all *nûsaži*, graded in accordance with age and rank. In every house young men or visitors of lower status and seniority would squat near the door while the head of the house, or honoured guests, occupy places on the inner side—the more honoured side. Special greetings of the same symbolic nature as the salute reserved for the chief are typical of the various ranks. Here as in the case of economic privileges etiquette marks off the chief not as standing on 'a plane by himself' but merely as the most prominent in a graded order of prominence. If on state occasions, wearing his state robe and turban, the chief is conspicuously marked off from the rest of the people, when going out to his farms there is nothing to distinguish him from an ordinary farmer; like him he carries his hoe across the shoulder, a straw hat on his head, and wears only the cheap blue cloth slung loosely round the body. There is thus ample 'neutral ground' in the matter of etiquette and distinction of status between chief, elders, and the rest of the people.

But above all, the attitude of reverence and the special chief's salute are reserved for the chief's person; they are not enjoyed equally by his relations merely in virtue of their being his relations. The exalted social position of the chief does not extend to his family—there exist, even in hereditary chieftainship, no symbols of a hereditary class differentiation. Later, in the discussion of social classes in the kingdom, we shall understand fully the significance of this 'democratic' element in Nupe village chieftainship.

[1] In 1936 the chief of Doko bought five sheep for sacrifices connected with the 'chief's cult', contributed beer to other ceremonies, and presented two gowns to men with whom he was anxious to keep on good terms—not counting occasional small gifts and contributions, e.g. to family feasts, &c. Altogether an expenditure of approximately £2–3, or 30 to 40 bundles of corn, that is, roughly half of his income from tithe.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

There is one exception—which proves the rule. In Kutigi all the members of the chief's family are addressed as *waci*, 'Great Ones', and though not shown special reverence are regarded somewhat as a class apart. The explanation is this: the rulers of Kutigi come from an alien group, those Bornu immigrants to whom I have referred already. Owing to their economic and educational advantages (they were Mohammedans in a pagan and rather primitive country) they had established themselves as the dominant group, and the leaders of the immigrants became the political rulers of the original inhabitants. In this position they were confirmed by the *Etsu* Nupe. In the Fulani dynasty of Nupe the Benu had an example close at hand how an alien group could arrogate to itself the position of a hereditary ruling caste. They followed it in every detail: from the Fulani kings they adopted the salutation *waci*; and like them they managed that the recognition of social superiority was extended not only to the actually ruling chief but to his whole kinship group—a whole hereditary ruling class.

BINDING FORCES

Let us try, in conclusion, to define the specific nature of the political unity achieved in the Nupe village. It must be emphasized, first of all, that it *is* a specific unity, and that it is achieved by mechanisms peculiar to itself. In other words, political organization is not—as is the case in many primitive societies—simply absorbed by religion, magic, or kinship, and the mechanisms of control which these domains of culture entail. Nor is it, on the other hand, possessed of any of the conspicuous instruments of political control which characterize other societies: a police or military executive, a disproportionate chieftain power, or an elaborate apparatus of coercion. Moreover, the connexion between political control and religious and kinship agencies is very close. Political organization delegates to the kinship system the important task of providing the executive organs for the community in the persons of the *nûsaži*, who, as we have seen, are village elders and family heads in one. And religious beliefs and practices supply the spiritual sanction of chieftainship and authority in general. But as important as these specific contributions of religion and kinship are certain less specific influences, by means of which both religion and kinship help to sustain the system of political control. Thus encouragement of intermarriage within the village community adds the strength of interlocked kinship relations to political ties; and the communal religious rites exercise, and underline in their own impressive fashion, the unit of the village group.[1] They do it consciously and openly: their dedication to the support of the village community expresses itself in the prayer formula which occurs in every religious ritual whatever its avowed purpose or the occasion of its performance: *eži u de lafiya*, 'may the village prosper'. Political control, kinship, and religion thus define coextensive social units. Only because

[1] This interdependence of political unit and religious congregation is analysed more explicitly in the case of the *gunnu* cult. (J.R.A.I., lxvii, 1937, pp. 91–130.)

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

the commoners, men without name and rank—sit and stand outside, chatting and watching what there is to watch; the members of the privileged classes, titled nobility, and Mohammedan priests, are sitting in the inner courtyard and in *katamba* (entrance-halls), each *katamba* reserved for a special group. Only royal princes and the highest officers of state are admitted to the presence of the *Etsu*; they sit in the inner part of the house together with personal friends and favourites of the king.[1] All these people come to pay their respect to their sovereign, to see and to be seen, to exercise prerogatives, or to proclaim their connexion with the privileged and mighty. This external arrangement of the Friday ceremonial is indeed a symbol of the whole social structure of Nupe kingdom with its rigid system of etiquette and precedence, its differentiation of status, rank, and prerogatives, and its display of wealth and power. This structure we must now analyse in detail.

THE ROYAL NOBILITY

The descendants of the house of Mallam Dendo, under their three heads *Etsu*, *Shaba*, and *Kpotū*, form the royal nobility of Nupe, the *ena gitsúži*, the Group of Those who will become King. They are *gitsúži* in the sense that from their ranks the new king is elected. The titles of nobility which they hold by the privilege of birth may lead every one of them, by slower or more rapid promotion, eventually to the highest rank, kingship. In most cases the royal prince who succeeds to the throne has reached first the rank of *Shaba*; the change from old to new king is thus made almost automatic, a dangerous interregnum is avoided, and the fight between the rival factions is confined to the less dangerous sphere of competition for the ranks next to the king. Only twice was a man who had not reached the title of *Shaba* (or, if the *Shaba* had died, the title of *Kpotū*) made *Etsu*.[2] In 1936 there existed, or more precisely, were actually held, 41 royal ranks, of which 10 fell to the house of Usman Zaki, 17 to the house of Masaba (the house which had supplied the last

[1] The arrangement at these receptions, the way in which the people who are admitted to the presence of the *Etsu* group themselves, is invariably the same. It is shown in this diagram:

Two bodyguards with ostrich fans
Etsu (on state bed)
Gitsúži *Ndeji* *Sarakiži*
Mayaki
Liman-Alkali
Mallams

[2] These exceptions were *Etsu* Mohamadu who, only *Makū*, was appointed *Etsu* by the Niger Company, and the present *Etsu* who had been *Ndgenu*, but had held the important office of a District Head of Jima. It is the present tendency of the Administration to abolish the office of *Shaba* and to make the appointment to kingship a free election from the royal ranks. After the death of the late *Shaba* in 1935 no new *Shaba* has been appointed. It is not yet clear what effect, if any, this innovation will have upon the internal dynastic organization. The threefold system is so deeply rooted that I believe the effect will be only to abolish a name, and that the rank next in order in the dynastic section will assume the main function of the abolished rank, that is, headship of the dynastic clan.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

Etsu), and 14 to the house of Umaru, the present ruling house. The death of a high rank-holder and the subsequent appointment of a successor is frequently made an occasion for a far-reaching reshuffle of ranks, called in Nupe *wùruwùru*. It goes hand in hand with a large-scale exchange of houses, younger brothers or sons moving into the vacated house of their older brothers or fathers (vacated by death or promotion), for the state residence of the highest *gitsú* ranks goes with the title. Rarely would a new house be built in Bida to-day for a *wacī*, a Great One, as the members of the royal nobility are also called; 'only *talakaži*, Poor Ones', said an informant, 'must build themselves new homes.' Appointment to a first rank and promotion to a higher rank is granted by the king in council with royal princes and the other officers of state. Any able-bodied man in the Fulani families who has reached senior age and who has proved his ability and loyalty can claim to be admitted to the ranks of the titled *gitsúži*.[1] But there is no rule. Favouritism, intrigues, bribes play their part in appointment and promotion. The ranks which a family can accumulate reflects its influence at the court and its favour with the ruling king. It is no accident that the royal house of the last *Etsu* (who had only just died) counts more ranks than either of the other two dynasties. Unlike the system of ranks which we found in the village these royal ranks do not leave an old man or an invalid who can no longer fulfil his duties in the possession of his office. In such a case a younger man is appointed to the rank, and the old holder is known as the 'Old *Kpotū*', or whatever the rank may be. A similar difference between the rank systems of village and state lies in that perfect health is an indispensable condition of appointments to any state rank. Deformity, even of the slightest kind, is ruled out. The younger brother of one of the Emirs of Bida, who had a withered arm, was unable to obtain any title at all. In the state system of ranks, which was based on service in the war and on offices vital to the safety of the state, respect for old age or consideration for even minor disablements has no place.

The investiture—it is the same for royal princes and for officers of state—is an interesting ceremony, an impressive proclamation of the main facts on which the feudal kingdom is built: social promotion, the oath of fealty and loyalty and responsibility towards king and country. A propitious day for the investiture is first fixed by Mallams or diviners. Then follows the invitation to the ceremony—gifts of kola-nuts sent by the candidate to all men of rank and standing. Drummers in the house of the *Etsu* announce the beginning of the ceremony; all rank-holders are assembled in the *Etsu*'s house. He addresses the candidate ceremonially, proclaiming three times his appointment. The *Alkali* (or *Liman*), as representative of the clergy of the kingdom, clothes the candidate in an embroidered gown and rich cloak—gifts of the *Etsu*—and places a turban on his head. Then he leads the prayer, and the *Etsu* addresses a final exhortation to the new officer of state: 'Practice for-

[1] The Nupe of Patigi have preserved a linguistic distinction which has disappeared in Bida, namely, between royal princes who have received titles and those who have not. The former are called *b'rama* (their traditional salute is *lerama*, i.e. behold the *rama*), and the latter *gitsúži*.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

bearance; do not set the hearts of your men against each other; beware of conceit, and do not fail the people.' All present repeat, like a formula of confirmation: *Hakiɲa, hakiɲa*, 'verily, verily'. Drummers and musicians intone the songs and drum rhythms which are associated with the family and rank of the newly knighted; he mounts his horse and rides, accompanied by all rank-holders, through the town, dismounting at each house of a prince or *saraki*, making his greetings to the head of the house. If the newly appointed (or promoted) nobleman is a member of the royal dynasty he stops at each of the three royal houses and says a prayer at the grave of his ancestors. A great festivity in his house, lasting for several days, to which everybody in the town is invited, noblemen and commoners alike, concludes the ceremony.

Descendants of the men who conquered the country and appropriated all vacant land, the *gitsúži* may become, through ordinary inheritance, owners of land and considerable wealth. But the appointment to a royal rank meant more than this chance of inheritance: it meant status, influence, and access to increasing power and wealth. The princes of rank were admitted to the *nkó*, the Council of State, but had little influence, it seems, upon the actual government—this was entrusted to the council of the more competent, appointed, officers of state. The power of the *gitsúži* rested in the main on two things: the part they played in the wars, and their position as *egba*, royal fief-holders and delegates placed in charge of the districts of the kingdom. We shall speak presently in more detail of these services which the royal nobility rendered to king and state. I will give here a list of all the ranks held at present among the *gitsúži* of Bida. To illustrate the system of promotion I have indicated certain changes in the distribution of ranks which had been anticipated by the *Etsu* and his council after the death of the *Shaba* in 1935; as already said, the Administration was not prepared to endorse this reshuffle, which would imply the reoccupation of the post of *Shaba* (see p. 93, n. 2). The list also shows some of the fiefs which were connected with the ranks in pre-European times, and finally the offices under the present-day Native Administration which are linked with certain *gitsú* ranks.

Dynastic Ranks in Bida 1936

1. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Maru (House of Umaru Majigi)*

Etsu, appointed 1935, former title *Nágenu*.
Shaba, died December 1935; till 1934 District Head of Sakpe. Fief in pre-European times: Mokwa.
'Old' *Makū*, till 1934 District Head of Kacha, then retired; previous title *Lukpā*. Fief in pre-European times: Kacha.
Makū, younger brother of 'Old' *Makū*; no official position.
Giwa, present District Head of Badeggi.
Cekpa
Gara
Lafyene (Lakpene)
Uban Dóma
Tswáyi

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

565 *Táka*, held by eldest son of *Shaba*.
Sontwdraki
554 *Wacī Taba*, held by younger brother of *Shaba*.
Nda Iya
Nágenu, held by younger brother of *Etsu*, appointed 1935; no previous title; District Head of Jima.
'Old' *Natsu*, retired from office 1934.
Natsu, son of a former *Kpotū*, younger brother of *Ginya*; on the Bida Town Council.
Shabarabá, a new *ad hoc* introduced rank, bestowed in May 1936 on the eldest son of the late *Shaba*, as no higher rank was vacant.

2. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Usman* (*House of Usman Zaki*)

'Old' *Kpotū*, died in 1936; for some time District Head of Sakpe. Fief in pre-European times: *Edupkā* (countries beyond the Niger).
Kpotū, son and nephew of former *Kpotū*; District Head of Kutigi. He will shortly be asked to resign, that is, to become an 'old' *Kpotū*, on the grounds that his health is not very good. The *Etsu* does not contemplate promoting him to the vacant post of *Shaba* in accordance with the general rules of succession.*
Nágya, till 1935 District Head of Mokwa, now member of the King's Council. He is chosen to succeed to the rank of *Shaba*. Fief in pre-European times: *Edukpā*.
Rani, since 1935 District Head of Mokwa.
Kusódu, younger brother of the late *Etsu* Bello, living in his Bida house. Fief in pre-European times: Kamberi country.
Wacī Tswa
Shaba Gini
Fogū
Lafarma
Kafa
Cata

[643] * The ground of ill health is a pretext rather than the true reason—and this is very significant. The *Kpotū* does not belong to the house of Usman Zaki, although he is generally regarded as belonging to this dynasty. He is a descendant of Abdu Gboya, one of the sons of Mallam Dendo whose offspring had failed to secure succession to the throne of Nupe. He is, in fact, the only member of these 'second-rank' royal families who had obtained, still in the fourth generation, one of the three highest dynastic positions. His premature resignation is a striking evidence of this dynastic policy to restrict succession to the throne to the three 'houses'.

3. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Saba* (*House of Etsu Masaba*)

(Late *Etsu* Saidu, died 1935.)
Wacimbe
Nákorji, District Head of Gbangba. Chosen to succeed to office of *Kpotū*. Fief in pre-European times: Yeti.
Lukpā
Tsaduya
Tsaci
Tswasha Giraba†
Tsuroma†

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

565
554

Benú, Fief in pre-European times: Kin Agbadya (Lokoja).
Tswanku
Tsoyida
Tswankúku
Rofiẽ
Cecekó
Nkoci
Tswashakó
Yitsa
Nddáma

† Two established *gitsú* titles, *Fokpo* and *Gbaruku* (a Dibo word, meaning Old One), are not represented in this list, i.e. are not held at present. On the other hand, new titles are constantly introduced to cope with an increased demand; e.g. *Tsuroma* is a Bornu title (*Ciroma*). The rank *Tswasha Giraba*, lit. '*Tswasha* bestowed in Rabá', seems to have been a newly introduced, additional, rank at one time, in Rabá, as the meaning of the title indicates. The *Etsu* bestowed a new title of this kind shortly before I left Bida on the younger son of the late *Shaba*, making him *Shabami* (lit. '*Shaba* of the House').

OFFICERS OF STATE

Placed under the royal nobility in rank but its equal in political influence is the titled office nobility of the kingdom. Its members are known as *ticiži*, the Titled Ones, or *rowoni*, the 'Turbans', so called because the gift of a turban by the king is the symbol of the bestowal of rank and office. There are three groups of officers of state, each of which is thought of as a sharply defined social order or estate—*ena* in Nupe, which means 'group', 'society', 'order': first, the *sarakiži*, a two-fold group of civil and military nobility, consisting of the *ena Ndeji*, the Order of Town Elders, and the *ena 'kũ*, the Order of War. Second, the *ena manži*, the Order of Mallams, comprising the judiciary and the clergy of the kingdom, the *Alkali*, judge, and *Liman*, religious head of the Nupe Mohammedans, with their scribes and assistants. The third class of state officials, lowest in rank but still possessed of great influence, is the *ena wuži*, the Order of (Court) Slaves; we shall deal with this group later, in the chapter on slavery.

We shall see that many of the titles of the *saraki* nobility are identical with the ranks bestowed on the village elders. Of some ranks we know that they have been copied comparatively recently by the villagers. Whether this adoption of state ranks by the village communities explains all the existing correspondences, or whether they are due, historically, to the evolution of the kingdom from a village community, we have no means of deciding. To-day, it is a correspondence in name only. The identical symbols of status in the kingdom and in the village refer to very different social contexts. The differences in the official duties and in the rules of appointment will become clear presently. Here I will only mention the difference in the social conceptions upon which the two rank systems rest. Both must be interpreted as systems of selection by means of which the society obtains its leaders. But selection in the village means offering 13 ranks to, say, 200 adult men or—expressed more correctly—13 families; in the kingdom, it means admitting to

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

565 554

leadership 30 men out of a population of hundreds of thousands. In the village, the position of importance and responsibility already attained by the individual who qualifies for the rank (through seniority, experience, and headship of a kinship group) is at least equal to the new benefits entailed in the appointment; in the state ranks these benefits far outweigh any position one could have made for oneself previous to the appointment—often the latter is negligible. At the same time many of the state ranks, subject to changing political fortunes, are held more insecurely. In the village, then, rank is essentially a form of assured public recognition: in the state it represents a hotly contested and often capricious elevation to the privileged *élite*.

I have called the *saraki* nobility an office nobility to contrast it with the hereditary nobility of the *gitsúži*. The *saraki* ranks are, at least in theory, always open to new blood. Only one or two of the higher ranks are to-day hereditary in practice, having become the prerogative of certain families which, once established in their influential position, secured these offices for their descendants and relatives. Civil and military nobility are mutually exclusive, and are ruled by rigid precedence and promotion. Promotions and first appointments are granted by the king in council with his princes and other officers of state. These ranks, unlike the *gitsú* ranks, cannot be accumulated in the same family; they are bestowed exclusively on one member of the family group, and no other close relative can claim a title or office in addition to the one already bestowed on his 'house'. Only the less rigidly defined benefits of status and economic privileges that go with the elevation to the nobility extend, to a lesser or greater extent, also to the other members of the family group. Outsiders, even commoners, who have won the favour of the king may be admitted to the nobility of the *sarakiži*. Success in war and outstanding military achievement constituted formerly the main claim to *saraki* rank. Wealth and financial influence, which, under the old system were bound up with big land ownership and the slave-trade—prerogatives of princes and noblemen—have come into their own in modern times and are demanding recognition. The granting of titles to rich traders in return for huge presents has, in fact, become a new feature in the Nupe nobility.[1] The result is that the *saraki* group embraces people of very different origin: descendants of the old office nobility of pre-Fulani Nupe as well as families of Nupe commoners who had become partisans of the Fulani conquerors, and also strangers, Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani mercenary soldiers, or rich traders who have earned the gratitude of this or that *Etsu* Nupe. The titles themselves equally reflect the situation, new titles being frequently invented or borrowed from Hausa or Bornu.[2]

[1] *Etsu* Bello and *Etsu* Saidu are said to have 'sold' certain titles for prices varying from £5 to £20 to ambitious, wealthy traders; they are even reported to have conferred important state offices, offices to which the candidate was entitled by birth and standing, such as the office of the *Alkali*, on the payment of a 'fee'.

[2] In present-day Nupe Hausa names have replaced to a large extent the original Nupe titles. The traditional Nupe name, for example, for *sarakiži* (which is a corruption of the Hausa *sarakuna*) is *agabi*, but this name is only pre-

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

Civil and military officers received no salary. The payment for their services took the form of a share in the booty of slaves, horses, or other property, made in the war by their household troops; of landed property and fiefs bestowed by the king upon his loyal servants; and, finally, of status and exalted social position linked with title and office. Every promotion to a higher rank, as it involved a larger measure of political influence, involved also claims to larger and more lucrative fiefs.

The *Ndeji*,' Father of the Town', is the head of the civil nobility. He is in charge of the affairs of Bida, and all reports or complaints are brought to him first. He is closest to the king, always about his person, the most powerful of all the officers of state because he 'has the king's ear'. He and the other civil rank-holders are the *shaworaciši nya minšn*, the Councillors of the Inner House, so called because they hold their daily *nkó* (council) with the king himself.

The *ena 'kū*, a creation of the kingdom, has no parallel in the village organization. Service in the war, open to every man in Nupe, nobleman or commoner, is compulsory for this class of professional soldiers. The 'war-ranks' imply tasks for experts, and special responsibility for the execution of these tasks to king and commander of the army. Thus the different titles have specialized meanings: the *Maiyaki* is the General-in-Chief, the *Uban Dawaki* and *Dokoyiringi* are in command of the main body of horsemen, the *Sokyara* is in charge of the mounted vanguard, the *Ejukó* of the archers, the *Sónkali* of the foot-troops, &c. The *ena Maiyaki*, too, holds its daily *nkó*, but not in the presence of the king. They, too, receive reports about the affairs of the town, and also of the country at large; but their main work is the discussion and preparation of military expeditions.

Only for the four or five highest ranks of the civil and military nobility is the order of precedence really rigid and generally valid. The significance of the remaining ranks changes frequently; bestowed as they are by the king on individuals to whom he owes gratitude or recognition for their services, they may lose their importance under another king, who has other, new men to reward and to distinguish. On pp. 100–1 is a list of the *saraki* ranks which exist in Bida to-day. Where possible I have indicated previous ranks and promotions, and also the first appointment under one or other *Etsu*.

The *ena manži* derives its name from the fact that the judicial and religious offices which it comprises are bestowed on Mallams, men of learning and scholarship. Profound knowledge of the Mohammedan literature, which is religious and juridical in one, is the only way to these ranks which are, like all other ranks in the kingdom, bestowed by the king. But the specialized training, the very necessity of finding a man of so special an education, limits the number of possible candidates. With knowledge and scholarship the office is handed on from father to son, political influence and power of certain families do the rest, and the result is that the offices of the *Alkali*, Judge, and *Liman*, Head of the Mohammedan clergy, become hereditary almost more rigidly than

served in Patigi. Or again, the highest military rank to-day is called by the Hausa name *Maiyaki*, instead of *Somaši*, which is the old Nupe title.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

the *saraki* ranks and offices. Thus the present Chief *Alkali* of Bida as well as his assistant is himself the son of an *Alkali*. The same few families supply to-day the judges for the district courts in Nupe and indeed for many courts outside Nupe country, where the reputation of Bida scholarship has found recognition. And, as a final result of this tendency to make these offices the prerogative of a small group, we find since the time of *Etsu* Mohamadu the two offices of *Liman* and *Alkali* combined in one person.[1]

The office of the *Alkali* in Bida, the highest Mohammedan judge of the kingdom, dates back to the first period of Fulani rule. Its importance and distinction is expressed in the fact that Mallam Dendo's eldest son chose for himself the office not of a temporal ruler but of judge of Nupe. Many of the men who held these offices were of great learning and outstanding ability. Some have left behind records of the history of

1. *Ranks of the Ena Ndeji*

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Previous ranks*	*Biographical remarks*
Ndeji	Nupe from Dibo	*Magajin Gari*	Grandfather was *Ndeji*, appointed by *Etsu* Masaba; the father had no title. To-day highest official of the N.A.; head of the Emir's council.
Nyáfyenye	Fulani	*Magajin Gari*	Father and grandfather both *Ndeji*; first appointment under Usman Zaki.
Magajin Gari	Nupe	..	Father was *Nyáfyenye* and later *Ndeji*.
Sonfadakó	,,	*Gadza*	Father had no title; his first appointment was under *Etsu* Maliki, his second under *Etsu* Mamadu.
Gadza	No holder at present, but formerly a very important title.		
Sakiwa	Fulani	..	Father was *Ndeji*, titled under Umaru Majigi.
Mamasũ	,,	..	Father held a lower title; he himself was titled under *Etsu* Maliki.
Etsu Basa	Benu-Nupe	..	A hereditary title held in one family.
Etsu Gbari	Nupe	..	Father was *Uban Dawaki*.
Tsadza	Fulani	*Galadiman Gari*	Father and elder brother have held same title.
Ndasũ	Hausa	..	Newly introduced title.
Galadiman Gari	Fulani	..	Father was *Gadza*; he himself was appointed under *Etsu* Bello. He became later a 'ward-head' of the modern town-administration.
Kotonkomu	Nupe	..	Father held same title.

[1] There exist two different kinds of *Liman* offices: the *Liman Ratibi*, the minister of the weekday service held in the various mosques of the town, and the *Liman Jemaa*, the minister of the Friday service, which is held in the big city mosque, in the presence of the king. In every part of the town there is a *Liman* of the first kind; but there is only one *Liman Jemaa*. And it is to this highest priestly office that we referred above.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

2. *Ranks of the Ena Maiyaki*

565
554
693

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Previous ranks*	*Biographical remarks*
Maiyaki	Hausa	*Dokoyiringi, Uban Dawaki*	Father received title of *Maiyaki* in the war. To-day official of the N.A.; on the Emir's council.
Uban Dawaki	Nupe	*Sokyara*	Father *Maiyaki* and *Uban Dawaki*. To-day on the Bida town council.
Sokyara	,,	*Wambayi*	Father was *Sokyara, Uban Dawaki*, and finally *Maiyaki*. He himself was formerly on the Bida town council.
Dokoyiringi	,,	*Wambayi*	Father was *Uban Dawaki* and *Maiyaki*.
Ejukó	,,	*Tswakoko*	Father already *Ejukó*.
Sondzamitsu	,,	..	Father had no title; son got his under the late *Etsu* because of his wealth.
Sonlawu	,,	*Sarkin Barayi*	Father had no title; son received his in the war.
Sarkin Barayi	Hausa	..	Father was *Maiyaki*.
Tswakoko	Nupe	..	Father was *Nagun*.
Nagun	,,	..	Father was made *Nagun* in the war.
Sagamawa	Hausa	..	This title is hereditary in one family, followers of the Hausa general and relative (by marriage) of Manko, Handi Boshi.
Wambayi	,,	..	Father was a serf (*bara*) of *Etsu* Abubakari.
Sanaji	Nupe	..	..
Galadiman Masū	*Komi*-Yoruba	..	Held in Bida now instead of the old Nupe title *Somasū* (the Nupe equivalent of *Maiyaki*), but is to-day a very small and unimportant title.
Luci	Nupe	..	Formerly a powerful man; lives to-day on a farm in Trans-Kaduna.
Rwafi	Hausa	..	An hereditary title, held by relatives of the Hausa general of Manko, Handi Boshi.
Sonfaddkwa	Nupe	..	..
Barīźe	,,	..	Father was *Sojetsu*.
Sojetsu	,,	..	Received title from *Etsu* Bello; rich landowner.
Magayaki	,,	..	Received title in the war, under *Etsu* Maliki.
Sougubi	,,	..	..
Sóshali	,,	..	..
Manlawo	,,	..	..
Mansarū	,,	..	Father was *Sonlawu*, a title which he received in the war.

Nupe. The judicial organization of the kingdom left them free hand to interpret and apply, even to alter and create laws. The names of past *Alkalai* are known to everybody, and are associated with certain new

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

laws or special judicial practices. Of this aspect of their activity we shall hear more at a later stage. But one point (already mentioned) must be stressed here. The office of *Liman* and *Alkali* could become hereditary; many judges and Mohammedan scholars are of Fulani stock; but this reflects only the political influence and partly also the tradition of learning in these families. As representatives of Mohammedan scholarship *Liman* and *Alkali* are only the most exalted exponents of a professional class which comprises men of every status and birth—the Mallams, 'learned men', who are held in high esteem by everyone. Even without rank or title, when of little and insignificant learning, they are placed above the ordinary commoner. They may marry the daughters and sisters of the high-born. The *Etsu* himself, descendant of a Mallam, puts a 'Mallam' before his name. Like his ancestors he honours and receives at his court all Mallams of reputation. They are a class between the classes, a mobile, privileged intelligentsia.

The description of the hierarchy of Nupe kingdom is incomplete without the mention of a last group of minor rank-holders, composed of the heads of the Bida craft-guilds. The guilds are closed occupational groups, the members of which live together in one locality and practise certain hereditary crafts such as glass-making, brasswork, weaving, &c.[1] The guild-heads receive their titles, together with the usual gift of a turban, from the *Etsu*. Though low down in the scale of ranks, they have yet an official standing, and are raised above the ordinary commoner and peasant. Their headship implies authority over all the members of their craft in town and village. Formerly the guild-heads received a small annual tribute of products of their craft from their fellow craftsmen. Like the members of the nobility, the titled guild-heads are summoned to the *Etsu*'s Council at the *Sallah*, the great Mohammedan festival; and, like the privileged nobility, they are exempted from taxation. Their only tribute takes the form of an annual gift—an *emisa*, or 'salute'—again of products of their craft, the cost of which is borne jointly by the whole guild, and which is presented to the *Etsu* at the *Sallah*.

Certain craft-guilds are linked with the dynastic division of the capital and are divided into three sections each of which resides in a different *ekpā*. The groups of craftsmen also bear more special allegiance to the royal house in whose *ekpā* they live and with the ancestor of which they associate their coming to Bida and the foundation of their guild. But over and above this party allegiance guilds and guild-sections are closely linked with the ruling king of Nupe. For the king and the court represent the most important customers of the Bida craftsmen. All orders which the court intends to place are given through the guild-head, who guarantees their execution and acts as an official 'controller' of his group of craftsmen.

A position similar to that held by the guild-heads is also assigned to the head of the Bida brokers, the *Etsu Dilali*, who again plays the part of an agent of the king in all matters concerning commerce and trade in the capital.

[1] The organization of the Bida craft-guilds will be described in more detail in Chapter xiv.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

We shall see later that the explanation of this incorporation of artisans and brokers in the rigid bureaucracy of the kingdom lies in the control which the state exercises over crafts and merchandise; only by means of a control of this kind could the head of this warlike state secure an unimpeded supply of the commodities that were vital to the court and the state: arms, clothes, and saddles for the soldiers, food for the huge capital, and the luxuries that were needed for the display of royal power and wealth. We find convincing evidence for this interpretation in the fact that the different crafts are not of equal standing. Some rank higher than others, and this grading is not correlated with economic success: the very prosperous butchers are last on this list, blacksmiths and brass-smiths, on the other hand, head the list, 'for they are makers of arms'. Only the glass-makers, a strongly independent and important craft, stand aloof from this order of craft-guilds. This is a list of the craft-guilds in Bida, with the titles of the guild-heads, arranged in order of precedence.

The figure in brackets shows the number of *ekpā* in which they live. The titles of the guild-heads are given in italics.

Brassworkers (2): *Muku.*
Blacksmiths (3): *Dokodza.*
Carpenters and Builders (1): *Egbaba.*
Barber-Doctors (3): *Sokyara.*
Beadworkers (2): *Majī Lantana.*
Leatherworkers (scattered in the town): formerly *Majī Kimpa.*
Weavers (3): *Leshe, Majī, Ndakó.*
Butchers (3): *Sonfawa.*
Glass-makers (1): *Mazagá.*

SLAVERY

The lowest in the complex order of social classes in Nupe are the slaves (*wuši*, as against *egi*, freeman, lit. child). But in this one class there are shades and distinctions of social status. Some slaves have risen to positions of wealth and influence. Others have remained menial workers in the households and on the farms of their masters. Pre-British Nupe numbered its slaves by the thousands. Twenty to thirty slaves was a moderate average for the household of a man of consequence. The prosperous craftsmen of Bida town, blacksmiths and weavers, always had slaves to work for them; even in villages one found households with one or two slaves.

The people of Nupe obtained their slaves by two methods: first, there were the slaves captured in the war, who became the property of the man to whose share in the booty they had fallen; and second, there were slaves bought in the markets of Bida.[1] The majority of the latter, it seems, were slaves sold by their captors—noblemen who had taken more slaves than they needed for their household. Slaves were also sold abroad, mostly to the south. Many Nupe men of rank were engaged in

[1] Lander reports that 200 slaves were on sale in the market of Rabá, the then capital of Nupe (op. cit. iii, p. 313).

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

567 themselves; so were children born of a slave father who married a free woman, and also of a slave father who bought a girl slave for himself and married her. If, however, slave married slave, the marriage being arranged—i.e. the purchase price for the girl paid—by the slave's master, the children remained slaves. But these slaves in the second generation were slaves of a different kind. They were no longer called *wuži*, but *mangi*, 'born as child' (i.e. as freeman). Though not really free they were exempted from many of the disabilities of slavery. The children of a *mangi* who married another *mangi* were themselves *mangi* slaves again. But a *mangi* could not be sold by his master, nor could he be maltreated or killed—in the latter case his parents could obtain legal [682] redress and would be paid the usual purchase price as 'blood-money'. At the death of a *mangi* only half of his property could be claimed by the master, the other half was inherited by his own family. The *mangi* also had family farms of their own, and were generally treated like full members of the household in everything except that they were not entitled to any share in the inheritance of their master's property. A *mangi* was brought up together with the children of the house, was given the same education, and, like the sons of the house, served in the mounted household troops. Many *mangi* would free themselves, or at least marry free women. But the names of these house-born slaves in- [551] variably betrayed their origin; for they were named by their masters, and given not the usual Nupe names but names made up of some well-known blessing formula, of the first words of a proverb, and such like, for example: Adetsua, from *a de 'tsu à sei Sokó*, 'there is no Lord but God'; Barsu, from *bar su ga Allah* (Hausa), 'leave them to God'.

567 It would be wrong, however, to assume that slavery in Nupe carried with it a stigma. True, the people of Bida still speak with contempt of 554 the 'pagans' and 'slaves' (the two terms are almost synonymous) into whose countries their fathers had carried their profitable raids. But, characteristically for Nupe, the stigma attaches to the humble status rather than to the misfortune of having been made a slave. It disappeared with the signs of success and prosperity, open to slaves as to anyone. The wretched slave who could never rise above a menial labourer had to bear the ignominy of his position. But in the case of the trusted slave in a noble household, and above all the successful, freed slave, the taint of slavery meant little more than, in their own words, 'luck of war'. Slaves who served in the houses of the high nobility did indeed share some of the splendour that surrounded the position of their masters. Able and faithful slaves were rewarded with the position of head slaves, overseers, bailiffs; their masters bestowed upon them rich presents and gifts of land—more land than they cared to work with their own hands, having become men of wealth and importance. Their masters bestowed upon them, above all, special titles, household ranks—the ubiquitous symbol of social rise in Nupe, which in this case obliterated even the last external symbol of slave status, the typical slave-names.

000 The royal houses of Nupe, like every nobleman's house, had their host

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

The royal houses of Nupe, like every nobleman's house, had their host of slaves: slaves for menial work—in the house and on the land—as well as the titled slaves of respected position. At the court this latter group of slaves formed the *ena wuži*, the Order of Court Slaves, a distinguished slave *élite* into which only few selected slaves could ever hope to be admitted. From the slaves captured in war those of high birth and status, chiefs or distinguished warriors, were selected for the court. These, too, were given ranks and titles, and could rise high in the service of the king. Theirs was the specialized service of officials and trusted royal agents. There were those who looked after the king's vast household; those who were in charge of the *Etsu* Nupe's no less imposing harem—both offices formerly entrusted to eunuchs.[1] Other slaves formed the king's bodyguard and police force; they were provincial delegates, tax collectors, trusted messengers, 'liaison officers' between the king's palace and the houses of his noblemen, and between the king and the army in the field. These slaves, like the other rank-holders, owned land and held fiefs. The Nupe kings in Rabá are said to have had only four titled court slaves; the slave ranks that existed at the court of Bida some thirty years ago (and the ranks still exist, although their holders are no longer slaves) were more than three times that number. Under *Etsu* Maliki, one of the last independent kings of Nupe, the most responsible state offices were taken from royal princes and *sarakiži* and entrusted to slaves. The position of the slaves as officers of state thus seems to have overshadowed more and more all other state ranks. Slave ranks were ranks bestowed *ad personam*, and ranks bestowed by the king personally, independent of the council of princes and ministers; and this gives us the explanation for their rise in importance. The offices linked with civil and military rank also depended to some extent on the personal favour of the king. But once appointed, these men stayed on, servants of the kingdom rather than of the king. They had behind them the claims of powerful families, they were exponents of political factions, and could play on that 'balance of power' between the dynasties. The slaves were personal servants in the full sense of the word. They were brought into office, not by family claims or promotion or a rigid rule of succession, but by personal appointment, selection, and trial. They were bound to the king's service generation after generation, by the strongest bond: their position of unfree men. It frequently happened that a new *Etsu* took over the slaves who had served his predecessor and left them their ranks and possessions. The rise of the slave officials at the Fulani court is the counterpart of the rise of a powerful, dangerously independent feudal nobility.

The following is a list of slave ranks held to-day, not by slaves, but by former slaves or descendants of slaves at the court of the *Etsu* Nupe. I have again tried to indicate in what manner they received their title, and also in certain cases the office which some of them are holding to-day in the Bida Town Administration. That so many of these former slaves

[1] In the pre-Fulani kingdom the court is said to have employed only a few slaves—all eunuchs. All slave ranks which have a *nda* in their title, meaning 'father' (ranks that are still in use—see attached chart), were originally ranks reserved for eunuchs.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

had been placed in responsible positions proves what I have said about the selection and rise of slave officials at the court of Bida.

Slave Ranks

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Present office*	*Biographical remarks*
Gabi Saidi	Kupa	'Officer of Liaison' between *Etsu* and District Officer	A rich slave who under *Etsu* Bello bought his title for £16.
Ndatwaki	Yagba	On the Bida Town Council	Father was *Ndatwaki* under *Etsu* Maliki; he himself received the same title under *Etsu* Bello.
Dzwodfu	,,	,, ,,	An hereditary slave title, first granted under *Etsu* Usman.
Ndamáraki	Bunu	,, ,,	Father was *Ndamáraki* under *Etsu* Masaba.
Sántali	Benu-Nupe	..	Grandfather was a slave of Usman Zaki; they remained slaves of this house.
Masántali	Yagba	..	Grandfather was a slave of *Etsu* Umaru Majigi; they remained slaves of this house.
Swajiyd'tsu	,,	..	Father held same slave rank.
Ndatódo	,,	..	Father held the same title and also title of *Ndamáraki*.
Manfáda	,,	..	Another slave title which has become hereditary in one house.
Sonmázi	Kusopa-Nupe	..	Id.
Ndádari	Nupe	..	Id.
Shangbo	Nupe from Rabá	..	Father was a *saraki* (*Somasū*) of *Etsu* Majiya. He was made prisoner in the war and became a slave of *Etsu* Masaba.
(*Sarkin Dogari*	Hausa	Head of police force	To-day not regarded as slave title. Formerly bestowed on a personal slave of the ruling king.)

WAR

It will be understood that this description is based entirely on information and the historical recollections of informants. However, the wars that were fought in Nupe and by the Nupe are not so far distant that there are no longer eyewitnesses left, or people who have themselves borne arms in these wars. Thus information could be checked and cross-checked. For certain details I could, moreover, count on most authoritative informants, who had played a leading part in the last wars of the kingdom; the description of the military organization, for example, is based on information obtained from the late commander of the *élite* troops of Nupe, the king's bodyguard.

War was essentially a concern of the Nupe state. No warfare or organized fights occurred between the villages or tribal sections of the

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

The rest of Nupe Kingdom was divided up into smaller and larger

'countries' comprising each a town with its dependent villages and *tunga* which were administered as fiefs through feudal lords or *egba*. The *egba*—a member of the royal house or of the office nobility, or a court slave—received the fief from the king together with his rank with which the fief remained permanently linked. Mokwa was known as the town of the *Shaba*, Eggã as the town of the *Ndeji*, Kutigi and Enagi belonged to the *Ndatwaki*, and so on. Promotion to a higher rank brought with it appointment to another, more lucrative, fief. The feudal lord himself lived in the capital and rarely visited his possession. The local affairs, the collection of tax, were in charge of his representative, one of his slaves or serfs who was residing on his lands as *egbagi*, Small Delegate. Of the tax collected in these fiefs, again a money tax, a quarter went to the king and three-quarters were retained by the *egba*, who returned a small share to his *egbagi*, salary and commission in one. Sometimes the towns or districts also paid an additional tribute in kind both to *Etsu* and *egba*. I have been able to collect some data about the tax levied in these areas. The uniform information which I obtained from different sources leads me to believe that the facts are substantially correct. The town Kutigi, according to my informants, paid under *Etsu* Umaru a money tax of 20,000 cowries (about 10*s*.) to the *Etsu* through the *egba*; to the *egba* himself 10,000 cowries (5*s*.) and to the *egbagi* 5,000 cowries (2*s*. 6*d*.). In addition to this, the people of Kutigi sent the *Etsu* 20 mats of the kind which has made Kutigi the centre of a famous mat industry, worth over £1, 4 bundles of corn worth about 7*s*. 'for the king's horses', and 10 mats and 1 bundle of corn to the *egba*. In modern money, the total tax of the town which at that time had eight *efu* and a population of perhaps 500, amounted to between £2 and £3.[1]

The feudal lord in Bida was responsible to the king for law and order in his district. The appointment of the village chief was, again, subject to royal confirmation. The overlordship of the king also implied the right of appeal of the villagers to the king against oppression or injustice from their feudal lord.[2] Lastly, the *egbagi*, together with the village chief, administered justice in the smaller cases and sent all bigger cases to Bida, where the *egba* himself would plead the case of his tenants before the court of *Etsu* and *Alkali*.

A variety of the fiefs just discussed were bestowed on individuals, relatives, courtiers, or favourites of the king, as personal fiefs, independent of rank and office. Even women could hold fiefs of this kind. These fiefs were sometimes hereditary and sometimes reclaimed by the king after the death of the holder. They were very small, single towns or villages, but one person could hold two or more such fiefs—which, however, were never adjacent lest the power in the hands of one person

[1] Oldfield reports that in 1832–4 (i.e. under *Etsu* Usman) Eggã, one of the largest towns of Nupe at that time, paid an annual tax of 120,000 cowries, that is, about £3 (Laird and Oldfield, op. cit., ii, p. 39). This fits in very well with the data I obtained.

[2] The people of Mokwa once availed themselves of this right to lodge a complaint against their feudal lord. When I asked my informants what the result had been, they shrugged their shoulders and said: 'The *Etsu* promised to help us; but does one Fulani go against another Fulani?'

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

631 became too great. The towns or villages which were granted as such
651 personal fiefs could lie anywhere within the boundary of the kingdom, on
the royal domains as well as in the areas held as office fiefs by *egba*. The
554 personal fiefs involved no legal or administrative authority, only the
authority of levying an additional tax called *edugi* (small tax) over and
above the royal tax, *edukó* (big tax), after the latter had been collected.
There was no limitation to this additional tax, which must often have
exploited the peasants ruthlessly. Yet I have also seen close personal
attachment between villages and their lord still existing to-day, bearing
witness to the existence of more friendly ties between feudal lord and
tenants.

631 It is clearly impossible to state in more detail how this administrative
system worked, and especially how far the administrative and judicial
554 authority of the feudal delegate worked in harmony with the existing
traditional authority vested in village chief and elders. Later on, I shall
give more data about the working of this legal machinery. But it is easy to
understand that the powerful feudal lord and his delegate could uphold
political and legal authority by the very fact of their power and influence.
They could, for example, secure redress or punishment where the village
chief's limited power might be too weak to enforce judgement or arbitra-
tion. But this intervention might easily distort justice rather than
further it. As aliens, never linked permanently with the people over
whom they rule, the fief-holders were bad guardians of tribal law and
traditional justice. This, in fact, reflects the fundamental conflict in-
volved in the system of feudal administration. The feudal lords were
officially responsible for the well-being of their subjects; they were
agents of a central authority which was vitally interested in the main-
tenance of peace and order; they themselves, like their royal master,
depended on the people of the fief for tax, supply of food, and supply of
men for their armies and wars. But the connexion of fief with rank, in-
volving as it did a change of the fief with every promotion, did not allow
the mutual attachment between the feudal lord and his subjects to grow
really strong and permanent—too strong and permanent for the safety of
the king and the unity of the state. To balance the danger that might
arise from a too firmly entrenched feudal lord, the kingdom had to risk
the other danger of maladministration and discontent among the people
on the fiefs.

642 This policy of preserving the balance of power between dynastic and
631 feudal interests which had to be re-established and readjusted with every
change of régime is reflected in the many changes which the administra-
tion of the kingdom has undergone in the hundred years of Fulani rule.
Etsu Masaba, intent on building up an enormous dynastic power, divided
the whole of Beni and Kusopa country, town for town, among his sons
and daughters and other followers as personal fiefs. There was no place
in the kingdom, the Nupe say, which had not its private 'owner'. The
Nupe nicknamed this generous king *ndă na ma gă na*, Father of Dis-
tributing. *Etsu* Umaru, who succeeded him, adopted the opposite policy
in order to win the support of the native tribes against the feudal lords
who had supported his predecessor. He abolished all private fiefs in

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

They come to Bida as traders or itinerant artisans, some for a short period only, others to stay. The trading caravans from the north stop outside the town gate in the *zongu*, camp, reserved for them. There are three such *zongu* in Bida, each situated on the territory of one of the royal houses; the caravans must stop in the camp that belongs to the ruling house—another expression of that comprehensive dynastic division into three. The traders from the south, individual traders and the strangers who settle down in Bida for longer periods, perhaps permanently, live in *lālemi* under their own headmen, the *Sarkin Hausawa* (or *Madúgu*, as he was originally called) and the *Sarkin Yorubawa* (or *Asari*), the Chief of the Hausa and the Chief of the Yoruba. These two men are the recognized ward-heads of the aliens' quarter, and latterly have held an official position on the Bida Town Council. Strangers from the rich countries of north and south were always welcome in Nupe. They were treated with special consideration by the rulers of Bida, they paid no regular taxes, only comparatively small market dues, and they were looked after by their own headmen, who were appointed to watch the interests of their fellow countrymen, as, for instance, in all matters concerning financial transactions. This treatment of strangers contrasts curiously with the ruthless treatment of the native peasants. It reflects the vital part that trade played in this country, in the households of this society which depended for its existence on foreign markets where imported arms, horses, and all the paraphernalia of court life might be bought, and where the valuable commodities of the kingdom, embroidered gowns, beads, brass- and silverware, and slaves might be sold.

Cutting across this threefold division of Bida there exists another division, still more important for the life of the town: the division into small local units, factions rather than organized town wards, which form themselves more or less spontaneously round the houses of the powerful nobility. This is, in fact, how the Bida people refer to the different parts of the town; they call them by the title of the most prominent member of the nobility who has his house in that locality, *efu Ndeji*, or *efu Dzwoáfu*, *efu Sokyara*, and so forth. This link of locality is explained partly by the fact that powerful men tended to settle their henchmen, slaves, and serfs in their neighbourhood, and partly by the fact that the people of the locality were ready to acknowledge as their patron the member of the titled nobility, living in their midst, who at the time had the greatest influence, the man whose rank and power promised protection and support to those who rallied round him. But it is not the strong, permanent link of the kind we found in the Nupe village. Nor is there real continuity in this voluntary allegiance of a group of commoners to a noble patron. As the ranks change hands so the allegiance will change; every change on the political horizon may dissolve the local faction and reset the face of the town.

Just as these rank-holders are themselves dependent upon the favour of the king and the royal house, and as they group themselves in accordance with that tripartite dynastic division, so these small local factions are subordinated to the threefold arrangement. We remember the three *ekpā*, the three 'banks', on which Bida is built: the large number of *efu*,

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

patron's family. If he has been accepted as *bara* by an influential feudal lord, he may hope to be rewarded with the grant of land or a sub-fief. A title, finally, bestowed by patron on client proclaims publicly the *bara*'s position as a henchman of a man of rank. These are the titles which are usually bestowed on *bara: Sonfada, Mižindadi, Tsowa, Tswanya, Tsadú.*[1]

In all these cases the benefit is mutual. The *bara* receives material support and possibly a rank; the patron gains servants, soldiers for the contingent which he is to muster for the king's army, and followers and henchmen to add to his prestige. The patron will choose his clients and will not accept everyone. A young man of about 25, who had become a labourer, told me that he intended eventually to attach himself as *bara* to a certain nobleman, but he was as yet too young and no one wanted him. To have gathered around oneself a large number of *bara* and *egi kata* is the final, most undeniable, mark of success. Whenever you visit the house of a nobleman, at any time of the day, you will find him surrounded by some of his *bara* or *egi kata*: possibly they have just returned from an errand or have come to discuss important questions with him, or simply to pay their respects and share, as they regularly do, his meal.

Often the loyalty of clients to their patrons extends to the whole family of the *bara* and is transmitted from generation to generation. But loyalty and ambition may come into conflict. Sons may choose a new patron for themselves, hoping for increased benefits from the new association; or the *bara* himself may leave his own protector when the influence of the latter decreases and look for another more influential patron.

The *élite* of clients are the *bara* of the royal princes. Not only are they servants of masters who have ample land and sub-fiefs to bestow, but they may also rise, with their masters, to the highest positions and become, some day, *bara* of a ruling king. These royal *bara* are almost equal in rank to the nobility of the officers of state. The *Etsu* Nupe has only two *bara*, the *Mižindadi* (lit. equal to major-domo) and *Sonfada* (lit. companion on travels—the present holder of this rank sits beside the chauffeur in the *Etsu*'s car), not counting the freed slaves who play to-day more or less the role of *bara*. But the lowest *saraki* titles which the *Etsu* may bestow on his favourites are nearer clientship than nobility proper. Social climbers, rich and ambitious men, could buy themselves a clientship in the house of a royal prince or the king: *Etsu* Saidu, the late Emir, sold the title of *Mižindadi* three times over. Wealth buying a serf's title—this is indeed a paradoxical result of a social system which, intent on promotion and social rise, turns even the humiliation of clientship into a vehicle for a social career.

The complex pattern of clientship and the various motives which make free men seek patronage are illustrated in the following list of *bara* who were in the service of the late *Shaba*.

[1] Political ranks are frequently distinguished from *bara* ranks using the same title by adding the suffix *-kó*, meaning great, or the word *tsu*, meaning 'of the king', e.g. *Sonfada* and *Sonfadakó*, *Soje* and *Sojetsu*.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

CHAPTER IX
THE POSITION OF THE WOMEN

RANKS AND OFFICES

562 554 644

IT speaks for the consistency of the political system of Nupe that the position of the women, too, should be drawn into its orbit and even into the framework of official grades and ranks. Among the women of royal blood in pre-Fulani Nupe three women's ranks existed: *Nimwoye*, *Sagi*, and *Wogbo*. Precedence and succession in these three ranks corresponded to the succession in the three highest *gitsú* titles. At the court of ancient Nupe the titles were bestowed by the king on his mother or father's sister, elder sister, or daughter. The holder of the title had to be a *nyisagi gbakó*, a 'strong woman', that is, a woman of about 40–50 years. She had to be unmarried, or else her marriage would be formally dissolved on her appointment to the rank, and she would forthwith be regarded as unmarried. She lived, not in the house of her husband or father but in the *Etsu*'s own house. The Fulani adopted the first two ranks, abandoning, however, the condition of celibacy or nominal celibacy, and made the two daughters of Manko the first *Sagi* and *Nimwoye*. The two ranks have remained in the royal house of Nupe since then. After the split of the dynasty into three branches the women's ranks followed the new dynastic division, the title *Nimwoye* being assigned to the women of the royal house of Masaba, and the title *Sagi* being taken, in rotation, by the women of the royal houses of Umaru and Usman. This rule still holds good: the present *Sagi*, for example, is a sister of the late *Etsu* Bello of the house of Usman, and the *Sagi* before her was an elder sister of the *Shaba*, of the house of Umaru.

The women rank-holders occupied an extremely influential position at the court. They took part in the king's council, they could join in the war with their own troops of slaves and serfs, they held fiefs and owned land. Theirs was the position of 'kings over the women of Nupe'. Although these political prerogatives have disappeared, the position of authority vested in these women's ranks is unimpaired. All quarrels between women, especially women of the noble families, are brought before them; the women of Bida and the villages send them presents and receive counter-presents from them, much as is the custom between the noblemen of Nupe and their king. *Sagi* and *Nimwoye* are often the official representatives of the court at the family feasts of the Bida nobility. At the name-giving ceremony which was celebrated in the house of the *Shaba* in 1936 the *Sagi* came to bring presents and congratulations from the *Etsu*—an honour which was duly appreciated by all who were present.

562 554

Among the Bida women of low birth, the wives and daughters of commoners, we find another women's rank, *Sonya*.[1] She is, as the Nupe

[1] The Nupe word *Sonya* corresponds to the Hausa word (and the equivalent women's rank) *sarauniya*, lit. queen. *Sō* or *So* is a Nupe root meaning head or chief.

[p. 147]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

put it, the '*Sagi* of the poor'; what the royal princesses do for the women of the nobility the *Sonya* does for the women of her own class: she advises them and arbitrates in their quarrels, taking, however, the more serious cases to the *Sagi*. The *Sonya* might almost be called a female officer of state. All large-scale women's work that is done in Bida by order of the king is organized and supervised by her—for example, the beating of the floors in the houses of the king and the royal nobility. The *Sonya* is, above all, entrusted with the supervision of the market. She is elected by the Bida women who are regular traders on the market, and her rank is confirmed by the *Etsu*. The respect and deference with which all Bida women greet their *Sonya* illustrates the importance of her position. Formerly she was a royal fief-holder on a small scale, holding land of her own; she was also allowed to levy a small due on all business transacted on the market. Of this levy the *Sonya* returned one-third to the *Sagi* or *Nimwoye* as a symbol of her submission to the highest authority of these royal princesses over the women of Bida. To-day, the *Sonya* is still supervising the market and the work of the women. She has kept her status and her official position as well: for she has been made an official of the Native Administration and granted a small salary.

In every Nupe village, finally, we find a titled 'head of the women', called *Sagi*, like the royal princess in Bida. She is usually a woman about or over 50. She is elected by the married women of the village and her appointment is confirmed by the chief. In larger villages there may be a *Shaba Sagi* as well, an appointed successor to the headship of the women. The title *Sagi* itself seems to be of comparatively recent origin and was probably, like many other village titles, copied from the Bida rank system. The original title which it replaced was *Lelu*. This title, though no longer used, was explained to me in most villages to be the exact equivalent of the modern title *Sagi*. Yet this is not quite true: with the change in the title a subtle change in the significance of the rank has taken place. As I have described elsewhere, the Nupe chiefs used to bestow the rank *Lelu* on the woman who was believed to be the most powerful witch in the village. Her secret knowledge could thus be made to benefit the interests of the community. Turned into an organ of village administration, this woman could be used, in the opinion of the people, to check and control the subversive activities of the other witches.[1] With regard to witchcraft, then, the Nupe have adopted the proverbial policy of making a (reformed) criminal chief of police, or rather an imaginary criminal controller of an imaginary crime. Their belief in the efficiency of this measure has not changed. Yet the curtailed power of the present-day village chief, who is no longer free to act upon the advice of his female 'controller of witchcraft'; the general fear in the country, born of the experiences in the witchcraft trial in 1932, even so much as to mention the word witch or witchcraft; and in certain places also the growing importance of other more prosaic business for the head of the women, have all contributed to suppress the magical aspect

[1] See *Africa*, 1935, 4.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

of the office of the village *Sagi* and to emphasize its harmless business side instead.

Thus we find that in many Nupe villages an efficient business-like head of the women has succeeded the *Lelu* or *Sagi* of the old type. In other places, again, the people would not admit the magic significance of the woman's rank. Yet the strength of the belief, concealed though it may be, was shown in a witchcraft case which I happened to witness in Gbajibo, a small village on the Niger above Jebba. Here the *Sagi*, the very business-like head of the local women, was yet behind the public outcry against an alleged witch. The women much more than the men were leading in this persecution; they had been the first to ostracize the victim; and when I questioned them about their motives, they all referred me to the *Sagi*. Her own motive appeared to be jealousy of the other woman, the alleged witch, in whom she saw a dangerous rival, possibly even for the position of a *Sagi*.

The office of the *Sagi*, modern or traditional, is invariably a much-coveted one. Her moral hold over the women, as our example has shown, is complete. It is equally strong in the less sinister spheres of communal life: like the *Sonya* in Bida, the village *Sagi* advises the women, organizes women's work, arbitrates between them, and receives small presents from every business transaction which they carry through.

MARRIAGE AND STATUS

The ranks and offices already discussed all belong to married women. But we have seen that they represent forms of status which the women acquire in their own right, on the grounds of descent, or personal ability, or both, independent of their status as wives of men who occupy this or that social position. We shall see later that the same principle applies also to the status won by wealth. In particular the status by descent of the Nupe women is affected but little by marriage, i.e. by the social status of their husbands; in so far as it is so affected, this change is in the direction of social advancement. Women of low birth who marry above their status into the aristocracy can claim the status of their husbands; and women who marry beneath their station do not lose their status but raise their husbands to their own social level. The men will be allowed to share most of the social and political privileges of the class into which they marry. Two cases were reported to me in which the men could even acquire *saraki* ranks after marrying a woman of the *saraki* nobility. But even if the men are not admitted fully into the titled class, their children would always acquire the status of their mother. Daughters may thus inherit the status of their fathers, and both sons and daughters that of their mothers; husbands may be adopted into the social sphere of their wives and parents-in-law. This social regulation may seem surprising in an otherwise strongly patrilineal society. But this one-sided interpretation of the change of status that goes with marriage is not an expression of matrilineal kinship tendencies, nor of 'feminist' leanings in Nupe society (though we shall find ample evidence of these, too); rather it expresses political

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

562 interests, deep-seated class sentiments, which cannot admit of a lowering of status in any one high-born.[1] Yet if, owing to the rigid 554 class system, marriage between the classes is thus turned into a 565 potential instrument of social advancement, its utilization in this sense is also rigidly controlled.

582 For marriage in the aristocracy, especially in the royal nobility, is to a very large extent endogamous—'family marriage' as the Nupe call it. As 565 the Nupe-Fulani regard themselves all as related, and as most families of the nobility are more or less closely related by marriage, practically all 'family marriages' of this kind are at the same time marriages within the ruling class. The Fulani in Nupe, moreover, following Mohammedan practice, encourage parallel cousin marriage (which is forbidden by the traditional marriage rules of the country) as well as cross-cousin marriage, and thus widen enormously the scope of 'family marriages', especially between descendants in the male line. Family marriage in Nupe, finally, is characterized by a much lower bride-price than that paid in ordinary exogamous marriage. This leads to the rather paradoxical situation, on which my informants invariably commented, that the wealthiest and proudest classes of the country favour 'cheap' marriage, while the humble commoners and peasants are committed mostly to a very high bride-price. The explanation is that the low bride-price in this case supplies an additional incentive for endogamous marriage—'class endogamous' marriage, as it were—and thus for the preservation of the social identity of the ruling classes (as well as, incidentally, a strengthening of their group solidarity).[1]

Indeed the counterpart of the incentive of a low bride-price in 'class endogamous' marriages is the 'deterrent' of an exceptionally high bride-price demanded in the case of marriages between the classes, i.e. between men of the *tálaka* class and girls or women of the nobility. Such cases are accordingly rare. Yet we may note that if a chance of such marriage exists, if the girl loved the man sufficiently to overlook the difference in social status, the high bride-price alone proves no obstacle. For friends and relations would join forces to find the money and to enable the ambitious suitor to make his luck by this advantageous marriage. The benefits of his new position would be considered sufficient promise of an eventual ample gratification. One of my Bida servants was an example: the son of a commoner, he had succeeded in winning the love of the daughter of a very high *saraki* and eventually, after considerable difficulties, in marrying her with money borrowed from friends and relations.

The endogamous marriage rules only ensure that the women of the ruling classes should marry within the class; they do not attempt to exclude the less dangerous form of dilution implied in the marriages of the men to women from other classes and strata. Indeed, the polygamous nature of marriage in Nupe, which forces the men to seek wives

[1] One of my informants who belonged to the *saraki* class even went so far as to explain the whole principle of having a different bride-price for 'family' and 'outside' marriages as a political measure taken by the *saraki* and Fulani nobility with the purpose of preventing commoners from marrying into their class. Though incorrect as regards the facts, this interpretation is significant as an expression of the dominant class sentiments.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

from outside their social group, precludes an application of 'class endogamy' in this sense. Marriage of this kind between the strata has reached enormous dimensions. And this shows, incidentally, that the rule of 'class endogamy' serves, even in the case of the Fulani rulers, the interest only of a social identity and solidarity and not, as one might perhaps assume, of racial purity.

POLYGAMY AND SEX MORALITY

In Nupe as in most polygamous societies in which marriage is by bride-price (and by high bride-price at that) the number of wives a man possesses becomes an infallible index of wealth and status. In the peasant districts, where we find comparatively little inequality of wealth, the range of polygamy also varies in narrow limits. Genealogies which I collected in the two Nupe villages Doko and Kutigi show the following range of polygamy (the figures refer to middle-aged or old men, both of the living and previous generation):

	Number of wives						
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*Over 5*	*Total*
Number of cases	68	96	20	11	1	1	179

The average is thus 2.1 wives per man.[1] To quote a similar average for Bida would be meaningless: the great inequality of wealth and status is reflected in the widely varying range of polygamy. In the houses of the *talakaži*, the 'poor ones', monogamy is the rule; in the 'middle class' the conditions are much the same as in the peasant districts; but as regards the men of substance and rank, though it would be correct to say that they have rarely less than four wives, the upper limits of their polygamy are very fluid, and cannot even be ascertained with any accuracy. Popular notions attribute to certain royal princes and, above all, to the kings of Nupe, numbers of wives varying between 100 and 200. Even the late *Etsu* Saidu is reported to have had sixty wives. Discretion forbade any direct inquiries. Besides, the vagueness in the legal definition of 'wife' and 'marriage' in these cases would have detracted from the value of the information. According to Mohammedan law a man may have four wives only. But this rule is easily circumvented by limiting the number of legal wives whom one marries with religious rites to four (or four at a time), and relegating the rest to the position of mere concubines. In the houses of the higher as well as of lesser nobility I found

[1] The range of polygamy varies to some extent locally. In Mokwa, for example, I obtained the following figures:

	Number of wives						
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*Over 5*	*Total*
Number of cases	44	28	3	3	..	..	60

The average is, again, 2 wives per man.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

difference in quality and value to a much greater extent, namely, fruit-bearing trees. 423 621

In most districts the chief has a special title to certain economically valuable fruit trees wherever they grow, on vacant land or on people's farms. In Doko and Shebe this special chief's tree is the locust-bean, in Kutigi and Wuna the oil-palm. In Mokwa there exists another regulation, namely, that all shea-nut and locust-bean trees inside the town belong to the chief, while the trees outside are the full property of the man on whose ground they stand. Also there is in many places the general rule that no fruit tree on village land may be cut down without the special permission of the chief. Sometimes family heads exercise a restricted right to the 'chief's trees' growing on their land, i.e. they return two-fifths of the crop to the chief and keep the rest. But the chief may also grant the full possession of these trees as a separate right; thus he [554] bestows the property of a certain number of valuable trees on an individual—young or old—as a recognition of higher civic status, together with the promotion to rank and title. The right to the trees, coupled with the rank, remains the property of the 'house', conditional upon the renewal of the appointment (to the same or a similar rank) after the death of each holder.[1] The shea-nut trees—to-day of considerable commercial importance—occupy everywhere in Nupe a special position. The trees on vacant land (virgin village land or no-man's-land) are common property. The women who collect the fruit go out in small [562] parties and share the crop among them. The shea-nut trees on occupied farm-land belong to the owner of the farm.[2] In either case the exploitation of the crop is the exclusive prerogative of the women.

A few words may be given to a special variety of village land, the plots that are situated in the village itself, round the compounds and between the village *efu*. This land is owned by the people who live in the compounds adjoining the plots. Its inheritance and apportionment is ruled by the same regulations as the inheritance and apportionment of the houses themselves and will best be discussed in a later section. The land inside village and town differs only in one respect from the village land without: it is never left uncultivated. Manured as it is by the refuse from the houses it can be used continuously without the necessity of being left fallow for a period. If the owner of such plots leaves the village or the town and does not return for some time, leaving no one behind (which has happened frequently in Bida during the last twenty years), the neighbours will use the farm-plots; they are always ready,

[1] A certain complication arises when the modern official Village Head is not identical with the traditional chief, for the former may assume control over the land only, not over trees—he may indeed not possess any 'chief's trees' himself, at least not at the time of his appointment. There is no evidence as yet to show how this contradiction will be solved in the course of time—except an indirect evidence to be mentioned presently (see p. 189, n. 2), which tends to show that this separation of land- and tree-rights is allowed to last for several generations.

[2] The facts mentioned here will correct the statement made by some students of West African agriculture, that 'shea-nut trees are generally regarded as entirely common property' (O. T. Faulkner and J. R. Mackie, *West African Agriculture*, 1933, p. 27).

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

There is little to be said about fowls. In every house chickens are kept; men and women, grown-ups and children, have their own chicken. Often one sees a young boy going to the market to sell 'his' chicken, given him by father or mother. The fowls are bought and sold regularly in the food-markets of every larger village. Fowls represent the most important sacrificial food of pagan (and to some extent Mohammedan) Nupe; almost every religious ceremony, communal as well as household-rites, involves the killing of a fowl. Chickens are, besides, the most desirable food the Nupe know. Eggs are not marketed and in certain parts of Nupe not eaten. The Beni do not eat eggs because 'they make men sterile and women barren'. The Nupe also keep pigeons, for which they put up a bowl of water on a forked pole inside the house. Pigeons are not as a rule traded in the market, nor are they eaten regularly, but sometimes the eating of pigeons is ordered by diviners for ritual reasons.

Donkeys and Horses

About three-quarters of the donkeys which are found in Nupe belong to Bida town. They are transport animals owned mostly by traders, pack animals used in their caravans which carry palm-oil and salt from the river steamers up country, and bring natron down from Hausa and Bornu. In 1935 the only districts possessing no donkeys were those which have other means of transport: the riverain area, and the district of Mokwa through which the railway runs. Again, the largest number of horses is found in Bida. Horses, as I have said already, are a symbol of rank and status. The *Etsu* Nupe may, as a sign of his highest esteem, present a man with a horse. But every man who can afford it will buy one for himself or for his sons. A horse represents, if not the most profitable, the most noble expenditure or investment.

Yet, profitable in the narrow sense, or in the wider sense as implying enhancement of prestige—all these possibilities of investment of capital in live stock are determined by the amount of liquid capital available; in other words, by the volume of money in circulation. The economic stringency of the country which, starting from the decline in the market prices for native produce in 1934–5, as well as the subsequent recovery in 1936, is reflected clearly in the figures of the census of live stock for Bida Division for the last four years.

	Sheep	*Goats*	*Horses*	*Donkeys*
1933 . .	5,788	28,856	1,196	111
1934 . .	6,600	29,445	1,160	157
1935 . .	5,010	25,876	917	137
1936 . .	5,702	34,751	1,007	149

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

working party follow the musicians, the rest meet later out on the farm. When all have assembled the young men start work. They work in a group of ten or twelve, starting on the same side of the field, leaving plenty of space between each other. Everyone is working his own ridge and, having finished one, he turns to the next with hardly any pause. The drummers and flute-players walk alongside the field abreast of the workers. Older men stand at the side, watching, criticizing, commenting. Often you can hear them call one of the workers by name, exhorting him to ever greater efforts, or shouting impatiently: 'Quicker, quicker!' When one field is finished some of the young men, the captains of the age-grade association among them, will execute a short dance, balancing their heavy hoes in the air and heavily stamping on the tilled field, while the drummers are arrayed behind them, beating the rhythm of the age-grade *take*.[1] Then workers and audience—and every *egbe* attracts a large audience—move on to another field, while some of the older men may stay behind to sow the newly tilled plot. On another occasion I saw the young men working in two groups of about equal strength, each under its own leader—one of the captains of the age-grade association. The groups started on opposite ends of the field, working towards each other. Now and again a worker would get up, survey with one glance the work which his group had been doing, and cry out in a long high-pitched yell; others were shouting with deep hoarse voices at every stroke of their hoe. The speed with which they worked, the whole atmosphere of the *egbe*—the constant drumming, the shouts from the audience—had something deeply exciting, almost feverish. I have seen a team of fifteen young men, the oldest between 19 and 20, the youngest 14, clear and till a farm-plot of one acre in two and a half hours.[2] The *egbe* work still more than *efakó* work is animated by an intense spirit of competition. The worker who has quickly finished his ridges will stand up and look round, proudly showing off his splendid work; he will chaff his fellow workers about their clumsy progress, their crooked ridges; he executes a little dance, singing, and shaking his hoe to show how leisurely he can work and still beat the others. When all the work is finished the whole party, musicians, workers, and onlookers, repair to the house of the owner of the farm. Here the feast which concludes the *egbe* is celebrated with plenty of food, corn-beer, and dancing, and much boasting and prancing of the young men, who are the heroes of the occasion. Nor is their boasting and prancing without significance. In the village communities where the traditional age-grade system is still practised, one of the important side-issues of the *egbe* is that it represents a regular test in which the young men establish their qualification as farmers. From *egbe* to *egbe*, every year, their skill and their achievements are watched, compared, and judged by the older people. In the last *egbe* of the season, or some other outstanding *egbe* (e.g. on the farm of the chief),[3] the results of this competition are made known and the young

[1] See p. 395.

[2] In another case I saw six young men clearing a densely overgrown bush-plot for yam-cultivation of about a third of an acre in one hour.

[3] An *egbe* of this kind near Bida at which new titles were bestowed was

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

561 476 241 554 farmer who did best is given by his age-grade association the title *Sode*, the second highest title that can be bestowed on young men. A man who is once made *Sode* keeps his rank until some other claimant snatches the title from him, or if he had no competitors, until he joins the 'old men' and retires from the arena of the *egbe*. In the urbanized age-grade associations of Bida this title and the whole usage have disappeared. In other large places which follow Bida fashion, the title *Sode*, though still in existence, has become a title of minor importance, a long way down the list of age-grade ranks.

241 476 The primary advantage of collective farm-work lies evidently in the time-saving which it makes possible. The second weeding, for example, which normally takes from five to ten days, can be done by *egbe* in one day. But this valuable help must be paid for. The cost of an *egbe* of from fifteen to twenty workers—the cost of food and drink for the guests and the pay of drummers and musicians—is between 6*s*. and 8*s*. *Egbe* work, then, implies a calculation of investment and return, cost and profit. To-day, farmers try to lower the cost of *egbe*. In an *egbe* near Bida (the *egbe* just described, in which the workers were grouped in two teams) the owner of the farm contributed music and food for thirty people, but no beer or palm-wine. The fare was simple—no meat or fish—but plentiful: porridge cooked in palm-oil for the men, half a bowl per head (1 lb.), and corn-gruel for the women. This cheap *egbe* cost only 4*s*. yet proved still sufficiently attractive to make a large group of workers attend.

Yet there is one element of 'profit' in this calculation which cannot be put down in shillings and pence, and which is of utmost sociological significance. *Egbe* work is performed only on family farms, i.e. on the farms of family heads and old men in general. Younger people, whether they still work under the family head or have made themselves independent, are not entitled to the help of the *egbe*. Thus the *egbe* provides a twofold balance, in favour of the old men who cannot work as efficiently as the young, and in favour of the sociological head of the family group who, though perhaps no longer able to command the services of a large body of co-workers, can still command the assistance of collective farm-work.[1] How real this balance is was illustrated in the example given before (p. 244) of an old man, the family head, cultivating fields equal in size and yield to the fields worked by his two adult sons. With the splitting-up of families and the reduction of the *efakó* group, with the disappearance, that is, of the clear-cut distinction between family and individual farms, the significance of the *egbe*, too, must weaken. Information gained from a large number of independent witnesses testifies to the gradual loss of importance of *egbe* work in Nupe productive life. Once practised regularly on every farm it has now been

performed on the new experimental farm of the Agricultural Department which was tilled in collective work.

[1] Recognition of this privileged position of the sociological head of the group in a wider sense is expressed in the traditional rule, still valid in most peasant communities in Nupe, that the first *egbe* of the season is performed on the chief's land.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

cloth of this expensive kind is sold for 4*s.* 6*d.*; as the cost of the material is 3*s.* 4*d.*, the profit made in five days' work is 1*s.* 2*d.*, or just under 3*d.* a day. If cheaper, plain material is used the profit is slightly smaller; the cost of the material for one piece of cloth is 1*s.* 6*d.*, and the cloth is sold for 2*s.* 6*d.*, six pieces being again produced each month, which gives a profit of 1*s.* per cloth, or 2*d.* a day. But instead of cutting up and sewing together the cloth in form of the *ede*, the weaver can also sell the full-length cloth as such to the cap-makers, or, better still, can make it into caps himself. A weaver can produce one cap (made of one *kpere* of cloth) each day, that is, twenty caps a month, allowing for two intervals of five days each for the weaving of the cloth. The white cloth caps, called *fula*, are very popular in Bida and are sold at prices from 9*d.* to 1*s.*; the cost of the material being 6*s.* 8*d.* the profit on twenty caps is thus between 7*s.* and 12*s.*, or from 3*d.* to 5*d.* a day. It is interesting to note that this last kind of work, although more profitable and also in much greater demand, is nevertheless regarded as a slightly degrading occupation. *Fula* making, my informants pointed out, is tailor's work, and not the proper work for trained weavers; they undertake it, as they frankly admit, only in order to obtain money for tax or bride-price. In this respect, then, the dissolution of the *efakó*-unit offers another benefit to the young members of the group who are out for quick money: for, relieved of their duties towards the head of the group, they are also relieved of their duties towards the ethical standards of the profession, to which the older men still cling.

In the villages only cheaper qualities of cloth, mostly native-dyed cloth, are produced; striped cloth which is sold for 1*s.* 3*d.*, the material costing 9*d.* and the dye 3*d.*, and plain indigo-dyed cloth (a kind of cloth that would find no buyers in Bida), sold for 1*s.* 9*d.*, and produced at a cost of 1*s.* 3*d.* But even when the village weavers produce the same kind of cloth as the Bida craftsmen, they sell it cheaper, being content with a smaller profit. Thus striped cloth of the kind sold in Bida for 2*s.* 6*d.* is produced by the village artisan for 2*s.*, allowing a profit of 9*d.* instead of 1*s.* 2*d.* On the other hand, the work and material of the village weavers are known to be inferior to that of the Bida craftsmen. The village weavers frankly admit it. They use the cruder indigenous dye instead of European dyes, they gin their own cotton and work with this inferior cotton-thread which breaks frequently during the weaving. They take ten days for the weaving of a piece of cloth which the Bida craftsmen finish in five. But just because they limit themselves to this cheaper and cruder material and cater exclusively for the less wealthy customers, they can stand the competition of European cloth better than the Bida weavers, who have specialized in more ambitious and expensive work. Here are the comparative prices: a striped cloth of European (or Japanese) manufacture is sold in Bida for 5*s.*, as against 4*s.* 6*d.* for Bida-woven cloth and 1*s.* 3*d.* for cloth produced in the village.

Formerly, when the *efakó* system in weaving was still capable of supporting a whole family, the younger members of the *efakó* group practised a little farm-work as *bucd*. The family head did not join in this additional work and often, if he was an old man, he did not even take part in actual weaving. His income was supplemented by training

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

426 735 a judge—the people may have recourse to pawning one family member to procure money for another. Younger sons would be pawned to find the bride-price for the eldest son, whose marriage must be made possible. Or a father would pawn himself to provide money for his son, perhaps to save him from prison or a death sentence. Girls, too, are pawned, though as a rule for a smaller amount of money than boys or men. I have recorded an interesting case of 'multiple' pawning: a man of about 30 had pawned himself in order to be able to marry, but could not find the money to ransom himself. He continued to live in bondage till his son from this marriage was twelve years old, and thus fit to be pawned in turn. The boy took the place of his father as pawn in the same house, and the older man was released. I do not know when, or if, the boy was in turn released.

426 735 567 558 It is interesting to compare pawning with slavery. The first difference is that pawning is, at least in theory, regarded as a purely temporary arrangement. The father or elder brother of a pawn would always expect to release their relative from bondage in from five to ten years. The pawn works for his master, in his house or on his land, like all other household members, slaves, or junior family members. But unlike slaves, pawns are servants in the narrow sense of the word: they cannot expect friendly help from their master; they would not, for example, be married at the expense of their master—if they cannot afford the bride-price they must remain unmarried. On the other hand, the master may not beat or kill the pawn, as he may a slave: this would constitute a normal case of assault or homicide, actionable before the court. A pawn who is unwilling or unable to work satisfactorily, can, however, be exchanged for another more promising member of his family. Pawns and their whole family are held in general contempt. There is no shame in having become a slave—this is 'luck of war'; but pawns and their families are tainted with a disgrace not easily forgotten. In pawning poverty, itself a shameful state in the eyes of the Nupe, reaches its lowest ebb. Even house slaves look down upon pawns, and order them about as their inferiors.

426 735 567 554 Another difference between pawning and slavery is the amount of money involved. While the prices for slaves are firmly fixed, the loan for which the pawn is taken as security varies greatly, between £3 and £10. The work of the pawn during the time of bondage represents the 'interest' on the loan. The profit motive is expressed most clearly in the practice that girl pawns were accepted only for smaller amounts. For with girls one had to reckon with a shorter period of 'amortization' as they might get married early and be redeemed by the bride-price. However, the profit motive is not sufficient to explain the institution of pawning. [517] A wealthy man could not, according to the Nupe code of morality, refuse a loan of this kind to a man who was badly in need of the money. Which means that the creditor might have to agree even to less tempting and profitable offers. Frequently he had to accept a young boy who, hardly yet an efficient labourer, would live in his house and learn farm-work or a craft only to be taken away again just as he had become a useful member of the household. For £5 one could buy outright a grown-up, well-

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

trained, slave; for a pawn, with his restricted usefulness, one might have to pay more than twice the amount. There is no doubt, then, that the institution of pawning represented not only a profit-making, 'capitalist' investment, but also, to some extent, a 'humanitarian' duty linked with status and prestige, a crude attempt at alleviating the hardships involved in the unequal distribution of wealth. Well-educated Nupe men, themselves members of the wealthier classes, with whom I discussed pawning, even went so far as to explain pawning (at least on a moderate scale) as an institution of considerable educational value enabling the sons of the poor to study farm-work and husbandry in the houses of prosperous and enterprising men. They would admit drawbacks only in the excessive practice of pawning, which, they maintained, was a recent development, brought about by rising prices and rising cost of living. These drawbacks, as they saw them, were that with the increase in their numbers, the pawns, many of whom frequently worked together in the same household, grew lazy and irresponsible, and showed openly their resentment at having to work for strange masters. The complaints of my informants were thus that in the combination of material and moral rewards which the people of wealth and status expected from the institute of pawning, the material rewards had completely to give place to moral rewards.

A similar combination of material returns from invested wealth with benefits of a more abstract order—status and prestige—is also characteristic of the institution of clientship (already explained in Chap. VIII). The share of the 'abstract' benefits becomes larger the closer we approach forms of expenditure and investment bound up with social status: display of wealth in household arrangements, festivities, the equipment of one's retinue, and so forth. To this and similar questions we shall return later.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

the minds of the older generation (though it is unable to enforce its authority), and they will be present, we may assume, also in the minds of the young men themselves when they reach a more mature age and understanding.

The economic demands which we must list under the second heading—demands implied in duties towards the community—are comparatively light. In village economy they are embodied in the regular contributions to village rituals in money or kind, and in occasional gifts to the chief (mostly gifts of kola-nuts or produce, worth between 3*d.* and 6*d.*). To give an example of the former: the total cost of a village ritual of moderate dimensions comes to 10*s.*, which sum would be divided among, say, twenty households. But rituals may also be celebrated both more lavishly, and on a much smaller scale, with a cost between 3*s.* and 6*s.*[1] In Bida we have again certain expenses entailed in religious obligations—alms to Mallams, the traditional killing of a ram on the day of the *Sallah* or, occasionally, labour and money spent on the building of one of the small mosques in which neighbours and relatives worship.[2] Logically, tax should have been listed in this group of expenses.

The last group of 'cultural requirements'—personal wants—is the most fluid and the most difficult to outline. It follows most closely economic stratification and the varying standards of living. As we shall see later, almost every want in this group is seen against the standards set by the social *élite* of the country. In certain respects, however, we can attempt to define certain minimum wants even in this field. Thus every family head is expected to possess, in addition to his simple working clothes, at least one 'good' dress, a dark-blue or white gown, in which he would appear at meetings in the house of the chief and at various ceremonial occasions. Similarly he should own a white turban in addition to the straw hat or cap which he wears on the farm, ornamented sandals of leather, and a stick or carved staff to carry about; he should wear a heavy glass bangle round the arm, possibly a finger-ring and various charms of the kind that are sold by Hausa traders on the markets of the country.[3] A major failure to achieve these standards of personal requirements is regarded as a sign of poverty and disgrace. Often have I listened to old men complaining about the sad state of affairs which compelled them to be content with a shabby cloth or cap when gown and turban were more fitting to their age and status.

But here we must take into account that cultural 'rift' between urban and rural standards of which I have spoken earlier in this chapter. Many wants which either do not exist, or do not exist in the same urgency, in the village are considered essential in Bida. Here the closeness of the social *élite*, both in the literal sense of the word and in the sense of existing social contacts, raises the standards of living. In Bida, where one

[1] See my article on the *Gunni*, p. 99, n. 2.

[2] The building itself is done by the people, the roofing and thatching by the professional builders of Bida. The costs were, in a concrete case, 10*s.*, and were divided among five households.

[3] These charms consist of a piece of paper supposed to be inscribed with a verse of the Koran or a Mohammedan formula of blessing, which is sewn in leather, and worn round the arm or neck.

[189]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

511 556 characterize the standards of living of the lower social strata—with their meaning significantly altered. For 'maintenance of labour' read increase of capital and wealth; for 'demands of the community' dictates of status and prestige. The latter pervade the whole field of expenditure. Expenditure of wealth in any form, whatever its primary and avowed purpose, represents expenditure for the sake of status and prestige at the same time.

Investment of capital in human labour—slaves, pawns, or clients—also enhances the prestige of the man who can afford such investment and the life of leisure which it entails. The lavish scale of kinship feasts similarly reflects social status. Presents on a generous scale, to the king or influential noblemen, or liberal hospitality as befits the man of substance, are at the same time practical means of winning the favour of social superiors and securing a reliable political following. In the house of a Bida nobleman of moderately high standing, for example, six *bara* who lived with him, and five *bara* who lived outside, in their own houses, were daily guests at at least one meal—a hospitality which very nearly doubled household expenses.[1]

511 554 595 In a society in which marriage is by bride-price, and by high bride-price at that, the marriage arrangements must also become an index of wealth and status. Wealth and status are infallibly reflected in the number of wives a man possesses. We have seen that, while small peasants or small craftsmen and traders are content with one or two wives, no Bida man of standing would have less than four, and many even considerably more (whether legitimate wives or concubines). We will not exaggerate the share of prestige and status in this 'investment': the practice in the houses of the nobility to 'pension off' ageing wives and replace them by young attractive girls shows the contribution of more concrete motives also. On the other hand, wealthy Bida families will pride themselves in marrying off their sons at an early age, four to five years before they reach what is normally regarded as marriageable age. This is clearly done for the sake of prestige of the parents rather than for the benefit of the boy-husband, who, for example, may still be a pupil in the Government school (I have known of two such).

511 554 565 484 This twofold significance of economic incentives among the *élite* of Nupe society is no less clearly pronounced in expenditure of a more personal nature. 'Clothes make the man' in Nupe as elsewhere; in the possession of arms one sees not only fighting equipment, and in the possession of a horse not only a means of transport, but symbols of rank and status. I will conclude this list with the description of one cultural incentive which carries the concept of status and prestige into a rather remote domain of social life—travelling. Travelling forms indeed part of the life of the Nupe gentleman, and the young men of the higher nobility, especially the princes of the royal house, are sent, like their brothers in Victorian England, on a traditional Grand Tour. It takes them through the northern Emirates, to the cities and courts of famous

[1] The total consumption at the midday meal was approximately 5 lb. of porridge, made with fish and palm-oil sauce. The share of the family, including the family head, his wives, and his children, was 3 lb., that of the *bara* 2 lb.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

rulers, with whom they stay as honoured guests, and whom they will repay, one day, by similar hospitality extended to their young relations. (I have mentioned, in a different context, how I met two princes from Sokoto whose Grand Tour had taken them to the court of the *Etsu* Nupe in Bida.) The noble tourists enjoy their travels and enjoy—as they put it—'seeing the world'. But this incentive of travelling for travelling's sake with which their education and cultural background inculcate them also serves, indirectly, the political purpose of fostering personal contacts and ties of friendship between the ruling families of Nigeria and, more specially, the widespread Fulani empire.

We must now ask ourselves to what extent these wants and incentives apply to the society at large and determine (more or less) the economic decisions of the people. We must ask, more particularly, whether there do not exist 'upper limits' by which the economic ambitions of the various classes are bounded—whether by choice or of necessity. Such limits exist in the form of objects and values which have come to be regarded as fixed symbols of political status and which, like status itself, are excluded from free economic choice, being attainable only by the ladder of social promotion. As fixed symbols of status, much as a uniform or decoration in our society, the glazed turban of the nobility, or the right to carry a silver sword, cannot be coveted as such. This limitation has also been accepted with respect to the recent innovation, the clock in the glass case carried by the body-servant of a noble master: the people outside the ranks of the nobility have not attempted—as well they might—to possess themselves of this new emblem of rank.

But though promotion to political status and acquisition of its paraphernalia represent things that 'cannot be bought' (we shall discuss certain exceptions later), most of the features characteristic of the social life on these more exalted planes are, in theory, of the nature of universal economic wants. Beautiful clothes, costly turbans, and the possession of a horse are widely desired and can be acquired by anyone who can afford the expense. Even wants which are so far beyond the means or labour which commoners and peasants can muster that for this reason alone they seem unlikely to become concrete ambitions outside the *élite* of the country, represent yet common wants and ideals. Thus we find the ornate high-gabled square or round entrance hut which is typical of the large houses of the Bida nobility also in certain villages, put up by chiefs or prosperous family heads. Beautifully ornamented houses of a more modest type, moreover, are found everywhere, in every section or stratum of the population. Now, one of the most convincing proofs of the universality of these economic wants is the absence of all unfavourable comments, especially in the form of ridicule, with respect to individuals reaching out for goals not normally attained in their station of life. This is a significant illustration: in the small village of Doko I observed one house built in an unusually sumptuous style—with coloured earthenware plates inlaid in the walls of the *katamba*. It belonged to a musician, an ordinary 'commoner', who had been very successful in his profession. The people who told me about the house and its owner admitted that he was neither a titled elder nor in any way

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

a person of consequence, but did not find it at all out of place that he should have built himself such a pretentious house. We shall also hear later that in the Bida age-grade associations young men of low birth can even taste the thrill of having special drum-signals and songs composed for them like the members of the nobility.

Polygamy is another characteristic instance. The large-scale polygamy of the Nupe aristocracy remains beyond the reach of all other classes. Polygamy as it exists in the houses of the Nupe kings must even be regarded as a royal prerogative and thus as a fixed symbol of status. Yet polygamy on a more modest scale represents another universal want, the effectiveness of which can be studied in every stratum of society, and when peasants tell you of the 'good old times' when their chiefs and elders were able to marry large numbers of wives, they express the effectiveness of this incentive.[1]

We may also mention the demands of hospitality, which are recognized among the poor as well as the rich. Inability to fulfil these demands is regarded as a definite deprivation. Even in small peasant households will you find 'permanent' guests—persons who have been adopted into the household and may even be supported by their hosts when they are too old, or too ill, to gain their own living. Significantly, they were described to me as *ke bara na*, 'a kind of *bara*'.

One of the common ideals of the people of Nupe demands closer investigation. The reliance on employed labour by the privileged sections of the society establishes a separate leisured class, which lives by the labours of others and gains its livelihood to a large extent from the 'interest' borne by their human capital. Evidently, 'leisure' is a relative concept. In a society where the large majority works (say) ten hours a day, a group which can gain its livelihood by working only half the time represents already, comparatively speaking, a 'leisured class'. Thus for Nupe, as for every society, the definition of the leisured class must remain fluid. The well-to-do traders, the 'intelligentsia' of the Mallams, the rich landowners, and the well-paid N.A. officials, all are, in different measure, members of the leisured class compared with the hard-working farmers, craftsmen, or manual labourers. Let us understand the full import of this fact. Many forms of enjoyment depend upon leisure: recreation and aesthetic pleasures; among women, the possibility of keeping young and attractive. They all form part of the standard of living which is typical of the highest social stratum of Nupe. Again, they become, as such, also incentives for Nupe society at large, and affect the evaluation of specific occupations. We have studied their effectiveness in such reactions as the break-up of the family labour-unit under the influence of what we have called the 'new values and temptations' spreading from the town; we shall discover an even more conspicuous instance in the spreading of the Mallam profession.

[1] It is impossible to test the correctness of their sometimes rather extravagant claims. Yet the psychological reality of the incentive is unaffected by such questions of historical truth.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

respects: not only in the productive arrangements which, in these circumstances, would no longer supply the ritual beverage as a matter of course, but also in the psychological attitude, which would have to admit a ritual beverage largely emptied of what Radcliffe-Brown calls 'social value', i.e. which would be nothing but a ritual beverage, completely removed from the habits of ordinary life. The village dance, again, is an expression of group co-operation and coactivity in the recreational sphere. Like the traditional occasions themselves on which it is performed—kinship feasts, *egbe* work, religious ceremonies, and so forth—the dance mobilizes and intensifies group sentiments. We might even go so far as to say that the unitary nature of the group which is thus mobilized forbids a division into neutral performer and aloof lookers-on. The correlation between professionalized performance and differentiation within the group is indeed clearly visible in Bida. An aloof aesthetic appreciation of professional dancers and musicians appears to represent the only form of entertainment acceptable to a society in which class prejudices and motives of status and prestige dominate all gatherings and festivities. Class prejudice has fostered a conception of dignity set against public exhibitions of this kind. The explanation is, I believe, that it would obliterate, even though only temporarily, the demarcation of rank and status. It is, in fact, quite inconceivable for a man of status to join in a dance, even in his own house, for example, at a family feast—to dance, that is, together with, and in front of, people who must invariably include persons of lesser station. Yet in the villages old men, even titled elders, commonly join in the dances of the younger folk, without danger to their dignity. To assimilate, then, the village dance to the performances which appeal to the 'sophisticated' people of Bida would mean assimilating the complete social organization.

For the sake of the theoretical argument I have stated the case of this negative form of culture contact a little more strongly than is warranted by actual conditions. Throughout this book we have found evidence of the gradual closing of the rift, and of the advancing assimilation even in these domains of culture. But indeed our argument is supported by this development. For the assimilation does not advance by the narrow channels of confined, specific, cultural changes. Rather these changes are carried by the tide of a far-reaching cultural adjustment which is transforming the whole productive system and the organization of labour as well as the social life at large in the Nupe village. The breaking up of the family labour-unit, and the appearance, in the country, of professional Bida musicians as spokesmen of what I have called the 'propaganda for the kingdom', are two convincing instances.

WEALTH AND STATUS

Hitherto we have been using the terms 'status' and 'prestige' as meaning one and the same thing. It becomes important now to distinguish between them. By 'status' we understand a more or less fixed place on the social ladder; 'prestige' represents a more fluid form of social recognition, gained by certain services or deeds in accordance with the

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

accepted code of society. Status in Nupe is determined by descent or formal promotion to rank and office. One of the accepted and most important means by which prestige can be gained is wealth. This raises the question of the closeness of the relation between status, and prestige gained through wealth. In other words, we must ask to what extent prestige gained through wealth tends to facilitate the attainment of status, and may even come to be regarded as its equivalent, or, conversely, to what extent high social status can be reached and maintained without adequate financial support.

Under traditional conditions social status and wealth could hardly become separated as political rank implied far-reaching economic privileges—the acquisition of fiefs and land, the chances of booty, profits from slave-trade, and so forth. Even assuming that considerable wealth could be accumulated also by groups outside the recognized social *élite*, such as traders and craftsmen, it is clear that their highest income could not rival the resources vested in a privileged political position. In present-day Nupe traditional political ranks and wealth are no longer inseparably linked. High social status does not invariably guarantee the demands of prestige also. The members of the *élite*, no longer in a position to combine the satisfaction of the more concrete wants with that of the demands of prestige, will have to choose between the different forms of expenditure. Yet here we find, rather surprisingly, that the expenses for the sake of prestige can be very considerably reduced without affecting the conception of status. The fixed symbols of status, the glazed turban and the silver sword, are either comparatively cheap or are heirlooms. The house, also inherited, may have to be left in disrepair; but its lay-out would still betray the status of its owner. Polygamy can be maintained to a certain extent thanks to the practice of marriage in the family, with low bride-price, which is customary among the *élite*. Horses, new dresses, ornaments, lavish hospitality—they all have to go. But travelling and leisure need not disappear. The former is satisfied by claiming hospitality from relatives or friends in distant parts, or even from social inferiors, who would not think of refusing such flattering requests. The latter manifests itself in the choice of profession of impecunious noblemen: very few have taken to farming or tried to learn a craft; theirs are mostly the unskilled 'free' professions of the leisured class. Thus even on the decline, the social *élite* secures the satisfaction of certain wants which to the lower orders of the society are permanently unattainable. Nupe society built up a strong defence of the prerogatives of status in the form of class-obligations and the utilization of inheritance. With its help the social *élite* of the country can hope to weather at least temporary difficulties and set-backs.

That this defence of class prerogatives has not yet lost its strength is evident in the hesitant attitude of the people towards accepting the new evaluation of wealth as independent of traditional status. The issue is by no means clear; it is confused by various concomitant factors, specially by the introduction of the new official ranks and positions under the N.A. some of which are vested in the old ruling class, while others have been bestowed on 'new men' from outside the traditional *élite*. But

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

there is convincing evidence to show that high social status still attaches to traditional ranks, though they may no longer command their former financial reward, rather than to wealth alone. Evidently this is only a transitional solution. In a society in which high status is so closely identified with a definite standard of living the separation of the two cannot be maintained indefinitely, at least not without some radical change in the whole concept of the *élite*. Theoretically, had their ranks not been divided by the appointment of some of their members to modern official posts, the Nupe aristocracy could have chosen the diehard solution of reinterpreting the whole concept of status and making it independent of economic advantages. As it is, the old *élite* must either win back its economic supremacy (which is impossible, though the attempts have never been given up), or else admit the new nobility of wealth into its ranks. We can observe this new conception taking shape. The respect for the traditional values is only strong enough to maintain an external continuity—the continuity of the symbols of status. And the 'new men' are the first to submit to this rule which allows them to legitimatize their position: they buy the titles which are the only passports to acceptance among the social *élite*. Here then, we have a final, and most modern, use of capital investment, for the sake of social advancement in its purely abstract and symbolic form.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

request to be considered out of his turn. He can thus put his hands at once on a sum of money for which, normally, he would have had to save for weeks or months. In this, then, lies the benefit of the *dashi*. The administration of the *dashi* association is entrusted to a man of good reputation, for example, a well-known trader or the head of a craft-guild. People who decide to form a *dashi* request such a man to undertake its organization. He will summon the first, and only, general meeting of the group, at which all the important points are settled, and afterwards arrange all matters on his own. People who learn from neighbours or friends that a certain *dashi* is being formed are, up to the date of the first subscription, free to join it; after that, while the *dashi* is running, no new members are accepted. The 'chairman' of the association, the *Etsu Dashi* (King of the *dashi*) as the Nupe call him, is responsible for the collection of the subscriptions and the regular paying out of the fund. He does not himself pay into it, nor does he receive any money payment for his trouble. He is recompensed by being allowed to borrow from the fund occasionally for himself and his own business provided that the general arrangement on which the group had agreed, and the duration of the *dashi*, are not altered. Sometimes he also receives gifts from members who desire an early share without being able to show serious reasons for this request. When money is needed, for example, for a funeral, in the case of illness, or for the payment of bride-price, no gifts or bribes are necessary to secure immediate consideration. *Dashi* chairmen who have the reputation of being good organizers are in great demand, and may be continuously engaged in organizing and supervising *dashi* associations, often several at the same time. Women are regarded as specially able organizers: one of the most successful *dashi* 'chairmen' I met in Bida was a woman; she was actually living in Doko, where she had lived since her marriage, but organized a *dashi* in Bida, sending her messenger, a young girl, every Friday into Bida to collect the subscriptions.

Although the benefits of the *dashi* embrace every variety of risk and expense, its practice is limited to the professions which depend on regular money earnings and money investments. It is practised by traders and brokers, both men and women, by certain groups of craftsmen, the wives of farmers, canoe-men (who are enabled to buy their canoes with the help of the *dashi*), labourers, and officials. The schoolboys in Bida Middle School have a little 'pocket-money' *dashi* of their own, the subscription being 1*d*., paid every Friday. The farmers, although familiar with the *dashi*, do not practise it, nor have they apparently ever done so. Clearly their stores of produce are regarded as sufficient reserve, and their labour organization as sufficient 'insurance'.

The number of members and the amount of the subscription vary widely. The sharp distinctions of social and economic stratification are visible also in the organization of the *dashi*. A well-to-do trader or nobleman would never join one of the petty *dashi* associations of small craftsmen or tradesmen in which the contribution is a few pennies. They would form a small *dashi* of their own, with a high subscription, even if they have to be content with five members only. During my stay

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

in Nupe I found the following *dashi* associations in practice: *dashi* associations formed by women, the wives of farmers in Doko, Kacha, and one or two other villages, in which the weekly subscription was 3*d.*: they numbered between twelve and thirty members; a *dashi* among the Bida barbers, with the subscription of 4*d.* weekly, numbering ten members (I was told, incidentally, that formerly their *dashi* was organized on a much larger scale). Another *dashi*, numbering twenty-four members, was formed by N.A. scribes; here the subscription was high, in accordance with their salary, 10*s.* per month. The teachers of Bida Middle School also formed a *dashi*, numbering twelve members, with a subscription of 7*s.* 6*d.* per month. Eight members of this group had formed a *dashi* with a subscription of £1 per month the previous year. Several *dashi* associations have disappeared owing to the economic stress. The labourers at the Bida workshops had practised the *dashi* till five years ago, but had given it up when their wages were lowered. The beadworkers, who had also practised the *dashi* formerly, had abandoned it owing to the decline of their business. I received the same information among carpenters, blacksmiths, and butchers. The canoe-men in Jebba, finally, who used to organize their *dashi* at irregular times, had not had a *dashi* for several years.

Returning to the general discussion of 'insurance': as the large co-operative unit in agriculture and home industry is disappearing, and, with it, the 'insurance' which it provided, one may wonder whether this must not bring the other, individual, insurance arrangements more to the foreground. It is thus rather surprising that the practice of the *dashi*, far from increasing, is disappearing. The people, as we have heard, explain this as being due to the general economic decline. The beadworkers said that they had no money to spare, and the barbers and labourers did not think it worth their while to organize a *dashi* with a small subscription. Borrowing, on the other hand, especially the borrowing by husbands from their wives, is markedly on the increase. Disputes over debts of this kind are frequent in divorce proceedings in Bida. The examination of household budgets also reveals a considerable number of instances (five out of fifty) in which husbands borrowed money, chiefly for tax, from their more prosperous wives; and even in remote places, such as fishing villages on islands in the Niger, where the women are by no means the enterprising traders they are in Bida or larger villages, husbands borrowed up to 8*s.* and 9*s.* from their wives. That under a continued economic stress borrowing may spread and increase further, and eventually lead to the introduction of professional money-lending, is not improbable. Borrowing in Nupe, which has once already reached a peak (in pawning), might well, in a different form, grow again to such dimensions.

It is clearly a sign of the growing instability of the native economic system that the solid and comprehensive insurance against risks which is vested in the co-operative labour-unit is disappearing, and that its place is taken by the most restricted, most temporary, form of insurance—borrowing. Once again, we encounter social and economic repercussions of the dissolution of the large labour-unit. If previously we have seen that this development has adversely affected certain aspects of

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

CHAPTER XXII

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

871 As education in the widest sense must be described all efforts, organized or otherwise, which tend to impart to individuals habitual forms of acting and thinking. Understood in this sense, every social institution involves educational activities by means of which individuals are led to acquire the behaviour-patterns that make up the institution. Thus our description of economic life has involved the description of certain educational techniques—the training in productive methods, the imparting of economic knowledge, or of concepts of property and wealth. But most societies also operate with more formalized methods of education, specific educational institutions which make it their business to train the rising generation in forms of acting and thinking regarded as essential by the society. We shall deal in this chapter with these formalized educational institutions, of which there are two in Nupe: the institution of the Koran school, concerned with Mohammedan religious teaching, and the institution of age-grade associations. The shortest definition of an educational institution is by the 'type' which it is meant to produce. In this sense we can say that Mohammedan religious education produces the Mallam, the Mohammedan scholar, and the age-grade associations the *zoon politikon* as understood in Nupe. We shall see that in certain respects both types of education can be identified with motives and aims underlying the political system, and thus with institutions devoted to what I have called in the heading of this chapter 'Education for Citizenship'.

MALLAM SCHOOLS

814 875 554 There are many degrees and varieties of Mohammedan learning. The title 'Mallam'—*mân* in Nupe—which one encounters so often among the Nupe, is by no means a safe guide. For the man who has gone through a few years' study of the Koran, having learned by heart a few *sura*; the sand-diviner or charm-seller who writes out verses from the Koran and sells them as amulets; the man who has acquired real learning and scholarship, and who can read and write in Arabic and possibly in Hausa—they all are called Mallam. Though the title is used indiscriminately, no Nupe ignores the essential difference between scholarship and the thin veneer of semi-learning. The Nupe distinguish two grades of learning: the lower grade is the study of the Koran (*kurani*), which consists mostly in the memorizing of prayers and whole pages and chapters from the Koran; the higher grade is called *kpikpe*, knowledge, or *litafi* (Hausa), book, and consists in the study of Arabic and the careful reading of the Koran and the better-known commentaries. The most advanced scholars would study, in addition to these books, also the historical records of the Nigerian Emirates which have been compiled (in Hausa, written in Arabic script) by scholars of former days. Only a student of 'knowledge' can claim to be a 'real' Mallam. While there are

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

hundreds of Mallams of the lower grade, there are few real scholars, and they are well known and highly esteemed. These scholars will occupy that most influential position which a Mohammedan culture accords to the men of learning.[1] Their advice will be sought by friends and strangers, in matters spiritual or profane.[2] The important political and religious offices of judge, scribe, and Imam at the town mosque are open to them. Some become attached to a noble household as 'private chaplain'. Royal princes and noblemen will seek their friendship, give them their daughters in marriage without bride-price, regarding marriage with a Mallam as *sádaka*, pious alms. Such is, the Nupe say, the *cinwa katũ*, the Greatness of Learning. To some extent, however, the high reputation of the learned profession is reflected also in the persons of lesser erudition. Learning is, after all, relative. And a Mallam of very inferior scholarship judged by Bida standards, may be revered as a fount of knowledge in a small half-pagan village. These Mallams in the villages are frequently supported by the people and receive annual gifts of crops as *dzankâ*, tithe.

The Mallams are, above all, teachers. They teach both children and adults, the former the Koran and the latter 'knowledge'. Every Mallam may, besides, be called in to perform a marriage ceremony or to officiate at a funeral—services for which they are remunerated according to their status and reputation. A few are well-to-do and own land, which is worked by their sons and pupils or, in some cases, by wage-labour. But most Mallams practise, in addition to teaching, some other occupation, which may or may not be associated with their scholarly profession, to supplement the meagre income of a Koran teacher. Some write out and illuminate pages of the Koran, or copy Arabic manuscripts, for sale. You can buy a sheet of this sort, very beautifully illuminated, for 5*d.* on the Bida market; more ambitious scribes would sell a whole copy of the Koran and receive for it—the work of five months—£1. Students of 'knowledge' eagerly buy these copies and use them in their studies. Other Mallams, again, embroider gowns, make straw hats or saddle-cloths, or do tailoring.

The size and standard of the Koran schools varies as widely as the status and standard of learning of the Mallams. You find 'schools' with two little boys for pupils, and these close relations of the teacher; and you find others—the schools of famous Bida scholars—the classrooms of which (as a rule the *katamba* in the Mallam's house) are crowded with pupils. The teachers are very jealous of the reputation of their school. When I was a regular visitor to Bida Koran schools the Mallam of one which I had not yet visited came to me complaining that I had left out his school, and quoted as reference a Bida Mallam of very high standing who was a special friend of mine. In the large Koran schools the Mallam himself teaches only the adult students of 'knowledge', while the elementary teaching is carried out by his sons or certain advanced pupils.

[1] Bida learning has a great reputation even outside Nupe; Mallams from Bida have been given important posts in other countries, and several Bida Koran teachers have established flourishing schools in Ilorin.

[2] One aspect of this spiritual advice is divining, which, as we have seen, plays an important part even in such political activities as the election of a high officer of state or the preparation for war.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

not as good as that of a farmer?' There is no evidence, incidentally, that physical disability, an ailment which might impair their working capacity, is a reason for sending boys to Mallam schools. The choice of the Mallam profession is, in the full sense of the word, a free choice of profession.[1]

The Mallam schools both in Bida and in the peasant districts are steadily increasing. The Nigerian Census mentions over 1,000 Koran schools in Niger Province, most of which are found in Nupe Emirate. I have estimated that Bida town possesses over 100 Koran schools, with over 1,000 pupils (out of a population of 24,000, with 5,000 male children). Kacha has fifteen Koran schools, Kutigi, a much more primitive and semi-pagan village, six, of which two already give higher instruction. This spreading of Mohammedan education leaves no doubt that parents increasingly desire their children to receive the benefits of Mohammedan learning. We have to accept this as a general trend in modern Nupe society, not so much towards true education—which few of the boys will ever attain—as towards the higher social status—the status of a leisured-class intelligentsia—which the position of a Mallam, rightly or wrongly, suggests.

Earlier in this book I have referred to the profession of Mallams as one of the mechanisms of social mobility. I have also called Mohammedan education, by means of which the religion and, indirectly, the whole spiritual background of the ruling classes is diffused throughout the country, one of the 'binding forces' of the Nupe state. Here we have found concrete evidence to support these statements. Let me summarize the main conclusions which we can draw from the present discussion. First, the profession of Mallams comprises contrasts of wealth and rank, which occur nowhere else in the framework of a single profession. The only common feature is that of a life without manual work, and of a certain social status raised above that of the ordinary commoner. Secondly, the Mallam profession is the only profession which we discovered in Nupe which is not ruled by the motive of material gains. On the contrary, people will sacrifice even the security of work on the land for the meagre and insecure income that goes with the rise in status and the attainment of the life of the leisured class.

AGE-GRADE ASSOCIATIONS

The Nupe name for age-grade association is *ena gbarifuzi*, lit. 'society' or 'association of the young men'.[2] Although nearly every Nupe boy or

[1] I had wondered whether there was any relation between the professional choice and the size of the family, whether perhaps in large families a son would be more likely to study for Mallam than in small families, where every member would be needed for farm-work. Then again, I thought it possible that in these days of the breaking-up of the family-unit orphans would be placed more readily in Mallam schools. Neither correlation, however, is true—as is shown in these figures: of 32 students of farming stock 9 were only sons, 10 were one of two sons, 9 had brothers who also studied the Koran, and 4 were orphans.

[2] Informants who have picked up a few words of pidgin-English translated *ena* as 'company'.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

them in advance. Shortly before the existing associations are dissolved previous to their reorganization on a higher grade, the outgoing presidents of the different grades appoint, as a last official act of their term of office, one of the members of their group as '*Ndakotsu*-elect' of the next junior group, i.e. the group which, in the new term, will take the place of the outgoing group. The *Ndakotsu*-elect will then take charge of the organization or reorganization of the new *ena*, and also of the appointment of a captain for the new association.

In these age-grade associations which rise *en bloc* to higher grades there is no gap between the termination of the old and the foundation of the new *ena*. The association which is about to be dissolved and promoted stages a last public appearance in a great feast, with music and dancing, to which all friends and relations are invited. A few days later the members of the *ena* meet again for the preliminary discussion in the house of the new *Ndakotsu*, for the distribution of the age-grade ranks which will be assigned to them in the new *ena*. When all ranks have been satisfactorily allotted the group arranges another large festivity, which is to announce publicly its reorganization and to inaugurate the new term. I had the good fortune to be in Kutigi in 1936, the year when the six years' term of the local *ena* came to an end and the general 'change-over' took place. It fell in the middle of March; the last public meeting of the old association was on the 7th of March, the session in the house of the *Ndakotsu* took place five days later, and the inaugurative meeting of the group in its new form as a senior grade on the 2nd of April.

Now, what are the qualifications for the position of a *Ndakotsu* and *Etsu*, and according to what principles are the *ena* ranks distributed? For the election of the *Ndakotsu* a well-established social position, good reputation, intelligence, and also a pleasant nature and, if possible, an open hand, are regarded as essential qualifications. A satisfactory financial position is essential because the *Ndakotsu* will be expected to entertain and to organize parties—and to do it in style. Most of these conditions also apply to the election of the group captain. The members of a newly founded Bida *ena* explained to me: 'We made Mohamadu our *Etsu* because he is a nice fellow. We all like him. He has good connexions; you see he is invited to the court; besides, he has plenty of money, and both his father and his mother are rich. He is also ready to spend it when we have a feast and want drummers and dancers.' On the other hand, a very ambitious young man who had been *Etsu* of an *ena* (of the second grade) and who hoped to be made *Etsu* again in a new, senior, association whose captain was resigning shortly, complained to me that his chances were slight, for he had not much money and could not afford the expenses which he would be expected to meet. It is implied in the nature of these qualifications that the *Etsu* is not always the oldest member in the group. In one *ena* which I analysed the *Etsu* was 20 when the *ena* started, and there were three members older than he. But as a rule he is of higher social position, and often better educated, than the rest of the members. Thus in a Bida *ena* which consisted almost entirely of tailors and embroiderers the captain was a weaver, the son of the Bida guild-head. In another group of a similar composition the

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

561 554 369

captain was an expert cap-maker, who made the expensive, fashionable embroidered caps. And in a group the members of which came mostly from the classes of the nobility, the captain was the son of a late Emir. It has become the fashion for captains of Bida age-grade associations to adopt an additional, allegoric or symbolic, title, which would also give the *ena* its name. Bida associations compete with each other in the invention of high-sounding names, which should evince the refinement and selectness of the *ena*. Thus one *Etsu* was known as *Etsu Yimani*, 'King Faith', as the *ena* over which he presided prided itself of the piety of its members; another captain called himself *Etsu Hankuri*, 'King Forgiveness', for more or less the same reason; a third *Etsu Turu*, 'King of the Europeans', a title which was meant to bear witness to the fact that this *ena* was organized on 'European lines' (to be explained presently).

The financial qualifications and those of status are of less importance in the village, where inequality of wealth and status are much less strongly marked, although even in the village *ena* the captain may be of a somewhat higher social position than the rest of the members, e.g. the son or brother of a village elder of high rank. The symbolic names of age-grade associations are absent in the village, where age-grade associations are neither as numerous as in Bida nor as interested in advertising their refinement and selectness.

561 554

The allotment of ranks in a newly founded association of the youngest grade is largely a formality—although the popularity and influence of the young boys among their age-mates will to some extent be taken into account. We have seen that these junior age-grades are generally regarded as representing a preparatory stage rather than a fully fledged *ena*. In the higher grades the distribution of ranks becomes much more serious. Change of rank during the lifetime of the *ena* occurs only when a member dies or withdraws prematurely, especially if he was holding one of the higher *ena* ranks, which must be represented. But when the *ena* terminates and the members form themselves into a new group, a complete reshuffle takes place. As the different grades use largely the same rank-system this redistribution of ranks at the end of an *ena* makes conspicuous the promotion, non-promotion, or degradation—as the case may be. These changes in the holding of *ena* ranks reflect faithfully the success or failure of individual members in the previous association, the capability shown in the performance of group activities, and the popularity enjoyed among comrades and superiors. The eager competition notwithstanding, the task of distributing ranks justly and to everybody's satisfaction does not, as a rule, take very long. I have seen these discussions carried through in one or two afternoons. But then, the general discussion is only a last, formal, step. Mostly, the two leaders of the group have decided the distribution at least of the more important ranks long before the first general meeting. The *Ndakotsu* of a prospective village *ena*, for example, knew a few months before the group was actually called into being exactly whom he was going to invest with the three highest ranks. As a rule the authority of captain and president is sufficiently strong to carry the vote. But instances of disagreement and

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

long fruitless discussions also occur, both in town and village, and sometimes a compromise has to be effected by introducing a special title (with the word *Tsowa* before any rank, equivalent to 'vice-' or 'sub-'), which will satisfy a refractory member without upsetting the arrangement at large. Severe degradation, on the other hand, is rare, as it can be easily circumvented in these associations which are not compulsory, and cannot force members to accept their status. This is a typical instance: A very ambitious and vain young man of Bida who had held high ranks in previous *ena*, but was given a very low rank in a senior grade, resented this treatment as unjust; he could, however, do nothing except to show his disdain by disinteresting himself in the association, and staying away from all their meetings. Actually he never told me of his shameful treatment when we discussed his association with the *ena*; I learned of it only by chance when, examining a certain association, I came across his name on the list of members.

The village *ena* comprises one rank which can be won only in strict competition. We have spoken of this rank already (p. 250): it carries the title *Sode*, and is bestowed on the best farmer of the group. Sometimes there is also a second farmer's rank, won in the same way for which, rather incongruously, the title *Maiyaki*, 'Minister of War', has been chosen. These ranks are taken only in the highest and middle grade, and are won in open competition at the first of the more important *egbe* occasions of the season, frequently at the *egbe* performed on the farms of the village chief. Traditionally, the title *Sode* ranked next to that of group captain in importance and precedence. To-day it has been degraded to a lower place on the scale of ranks. Of course, neither the title nor the particular qualification for which it is bestowed is recognized in Bida. The rank of *Sode* is also the only rank that may change hands (at least in theory) during the term of the *ena*. Although this happens very rarely (I have not met with any actual instance), all people agree that if at one of the occasions of collective farm-work an appointed *Sode* proved himself to be inferior in skill to another member of the *ena*, he would have to surrender his title.

Age-grade ranks are largely copied from the political rank-system obtaining in the community to which the *ena* belongs. It is not a very exact copy—although the *ena* tends to arrange its ranks according to the order of precedence which they follow in the political hierarchy. In Bida the distinctions between the different classes of political ranks are not observed, and military and civil ranks, office titles and titles of the royal nobility, are bestowed indiscriminately. The village *ena* remains more faithful to the rank-system of the community, and would, for example, adopt its typical, possibly uncommon, titles of elders. But as the membership of the *ena*—especially of the junior grades—may be considerably larger than the number of titled village elders, ranks from outside the traditional rank-system may have to be introduced, preferably from the rank-system of the capital. The younger generation is indeed always ready and eager to adopt such innovations. Rank-systems of heterogeneous nature, and rather arbitrary precedence are the result. However, we must not forget that the rank-systems of many villages ar

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

561 554 themselves similarly heterogeneous and arbitrary, including Bida titles among its traditional village ranks.

561 554 516 The system of precedence involved in *ena* ranks and grades is taken very seriously, and the rigid rules of etiquette which govern it are enacted with all solemnity. Much of the *ena* business takes place, as we shall see, within the single *ena*; but when members of different grades meet—for example, at family feasts in the house of a member, or at collective farm-work—submissive or condescending behaviour marks their relation towards each other. Members of a junior grade will never dance when members of senior grades are present, except with their special permission and at their request; in collective farm-work the junior grades work at the back of the team, at less important and less conspicuous tasks. Age-grade etiquette is even more emphatic within the individual association. At communal meals the 'subalterns' will wait till their superiors have eaten; at *ena* feasts subaltern and senior ranks will never dance at the same time; when greeting a superior, the age-grade member of lower rank will squat down and bend his head, exactly as prescribed for intercourse between superiors and inferiors in the social scale of 'real life'.

561 554 369 In the village *ena* it is only in general terms that the ranks indicate social position on the rank-scale of the association. In the town *ena* the ranks are sometimes chosen so as to indicate and do justice to the special gifts, or the special social position outside the *ena*, which characterize individual members. In this the organization of the town *ena* reflects the more highly differentiated social structure of urban society. Thus a Bida *ena*, composed largely of illiterate members, assigned to a young man who had been educated in the Government Middle School the title *Naïbi*, a rank of the Mohammedan clergy which can be held only by scholars. The rank-list of another *ena* included the rank *Boroti*, lit. Head of the Bororó, its holder being the son of the late Emir's 'regent-delegate' for the Bororó Fulani. Some Bida age-grade ranks indicate a certain official capacity held by a member in the *ena*. Thus I found a rank *Dzufā* (lit. pocket) bestowed on a young man who acted as 'purser' of the group. All purchases and payments for *ena* purposes were made through him; when, for example, a member decided to give a party for the group he would place his money contribution in the hands of the *Etsu*, who would then hand it over to the 'purser' as the member responsible for financial arrangements. In one *ena* I found the rather curious rank *Mataushe* (Hausa, lit. 'the man who rubs', i.e. 'masseur'), by which name a certain slave or body-servant of the Nupe king was known whose special duty it was to massage the feet of his master. In like manner it was the duty of this 'office holder' in the age-grade association to massage the feet of his *Etsu* at meetings of the group when his master felt tired.

561 554 177 One group of ranks typical of the Bida *ena* deserves special attention, namely the ranks which are organized on 'European lines' and copy, not ranks and offices of Nupe society, but ranks, offices, and even names of Europeans with whom the Nupe had come into contact. Such titles are often amusing and even puzzling. In one *ena* the head of the group was

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

not called *Etsu* but *Gomna Ture*, European Governor. Other ranks in the same *ena* were *Kantoma* (Station Magistrate), *Joji* (District Officer), *Likita* (Doctor); there was also the rank *Dupienne*, derived from the name of Mr. Dupigny, a former Resident of Niger Province, a rank *Borti* (Major Burton), *Mallam Smi* (Mr. Smith, a former Superintendent of Education), and *Jamsi Dogo* (lit. Long James, a title which referred to a former clerk in the Divisional Office); it was, not unnaturally, the lowest title on the rank-list. Another *ena* organized on modern lines was divided into two sections, a 'native' and a 'European' section, the former consisting of Nupe titles, the latter of Europeanized names and ranks, such as *Gomna*, *Joji*, *Likita*, *Rezdet* (Resident), *Kantoma*, *Misisi* (Mrs.), *Hafissa* (Officer), and *Karamin Joji* (Assistant District Officer). In the normal business of the *ena* these two sections behaved differently, and were bound by different rules of etiquette, native and 'European', which meant that the members of the 'European section' had to greet each other in European fashion, by lifting their caps, and had to eat at a table with fork and spoon. I could not help laughing when these rules were explained to me; but the head of the group pointed out, rather indignantly, that this was the most natural thing in the world; after all, 'a Governor does not eat with his hands'.

The seriousness with which these distinctions of ranks are observed, the realism with which this playing at society *à la Européenne* is enacted, forbids us to treat it merely as a childish and meaningless make-belief. Psychologically, it has the significance of a substitute for thrills and achievements which normal life cannot offer. The inclusion of titles and forms of conduct copied from the British officials in the country is part of that 'realism' which marks age-grade etiquette and precedence: it does justice to the new political order of the society, and partly also to the fact that high social position in present-day native society implies intimacy with the Administration and high British officials. If it were asked why the Bida *ena* chose as symbols for social gradation ranks and offices so far removed from their ordinary life, I should point out that there is less difference than one might assume between the two models which the *ena* could choose—the model of European and the model of native society. To the average Bida man the highest ranks and offices of his own society are no less remote and inaccessible than the office of a District Officer or Governor. We must add that the choice of a particular rank-system for the *ena* is in no way determined by the social stratum from which it is recruited. Bida age-grade associations of *tdlaka* and *saraki* alike adopt the highest ranks both of traditional and British society. Only for a small minority—the few *ena* of the ruling class—may these ranks and offices, and the whole exalted social life which they depict, one day become reality. For the large majority they represent an infinitely remote, imaginary social existence.

Here we are led to the wider problem of the relation between the world of pretence built up in the age-grade association and the values of 'real', that is, adult, social life. It can best be approached through a comparison of village and town *ena*. In the village association the social life enacted in the *ena*, and its prototype in adult life, stand in the relation of potentiality

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

and reality. The prototypes of *ena* ranks are all (at least theoretically) within the reach of the individual members. Every one of the young men who have gone through the *ena* may find when he reaches the suitable age that elimination by death or illness of senior relatives has singled him out for the position of a family head, and thus for a *nūsa* rank. Indeed, the promotion which accompanied his age-grade career will serve as an important qualification in the bestowal of the real rank by chiefs and elders. In certain respects all *ena* ranks of the senior grade retain their validity outside the *ena*, and after its expiry. The code of age-grade etiquette expires with the age-grade association. Not so the symbols of age-grade achievement: a man will be called by his rank rather than his name years after the *ena* has come to an end, often even for life—especially if he had held a very high rank. Men who have once been elected as *Etsu* or *Ndakotsu*, even when they are not, or not yet, appointed to a *nūsa* rank, will occupy a position of some distinction in their native village. Not only are they addressed and known by their *ena* titles, but village elders will pay attention to their opinion, and will entrust them with responsible tasks—in the organization of a ceremony, or of important collective work carried on outside the framework of the age-grade association. *Ena* ranks will never be confused with the political ranks of the village; they remain *tici nya ena*, ranks of the age-grade association. But although still only models of the 'real thing', they are 'real' in the sense that they indicate the varying qualification of individuals for access to the final social advancement. In the village *ena*, then, and similarly in the few age-grade associations in Bida which are recruited from the ruling classes, the *ena* rank-system anticipates a future social status; it introduces social concepts, and practises forms of conduct the effectiveness of which will be proved in adult life.

None of this is true of the average Bida association. Although here, again, the ranks attained in the senior grade accompany a man through life, they can claim no significance beyond that accorded to them by the rules of the game. A game indeed it is. These ranks let you enjoy fictitious contacts with a world of rank and power which you can never hope to enter in reality. Their upward trend, their incentive of competition, imply, not preparation or anticipation, but pretence, imitation—'substitution'.

Let us examine now the composition of the age-grade associations with regard to the social groups and strata which they absorb. In small villages a single age-grade association includes the youths of the whole village, and may even go beyond it, including the 'dependencies' of the village, the small *tunga* settlements, or linking a number of *tunga* settlements with one another. In the scattered hamlets round Bida the boys and young men of three to four hamlets join in a common *ena*. In very large villages (e.g. Kutigi) the age-grade is subdivided into a number of associations, each embracing one large, or two or three small, neighbouring, village *efu*. The age-grade itself, however, stretches across the whole village community, and the different associations conform to the same pattern with regard to the length of the term, and the time and year of the 'change-over' from grade to grade. In Bida the sub-

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

The integrative tendencies in the *ena* are expressed in every one of the typical age-grade activities. In the village they revolve round the three centres of social life: work, recreation, religion. In the Bida *ena* the first is reduced to insignificant dimensions; the second is raised to almost paramount importance; the third remains on the whole unchanged, being only transferred to a different plane—Mohammedan religion.

I have already spoken of the role which the *ena* plays in organizing collective farm-work in the village. We need only add that these activities concern the higher age-grades more than the junior groups, the members of which are not yet skilled farmers. It is commonly agreed that every young man who has gone through the three grades leaves the *ena* a fully trained farmer. Not everyone can become a *Sode*; but the success of the team counts for much. Here the *Ndakotsu* will prove his capability as organizer. He will put his pride into making his team the most efficient—all means being counted as fair. An old man, still known as *Ndakotsu*, told me how he used to help his group of workers to defeat all the other teams by means of a charm which 'made their hoes go twice as fast'.

Under recreational aims we must understand both recreation in the narrow sense—age-grade feasts and 'parties'—and the conventional festivities with which the Nupe celebrate kinship events: naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals. The recreational activities in the narrow sense concern the individual association; in the celebration of kinship events to which all young men who are related to the family are invited, members of different grades frequently join. The *Ndakotsu*, *Etsu*, and also the members of higher rank are expected to entertain the group in their houses at fairly regular intervals. There will be food, drinks, kola-nuts, and often drummers and dancers. In Bida the members of the *ena* meet at least once a month at such parties. Smaller festivities are attended only by the *ena* members themselves; to the larger meetings, especially those which mark the beginning and end of the *ena* term, friends and relations of both sexes are also invited. At one of the festivities with which the inauguration of the new age-grade term was celebrated in Kutigi I counted well over a hundred guests.

Let me take you to such an age-grade feast in Bida. It is held in the courtyard of the house. It starts in the afternoon or evening and lasts far into the night. The guests sit and squat in a closely packed circle, leaving a small space in the centre for drummers and dancers. On one side the host is sitting together with *Etsu* and *Ndakotsu*; as a rule they only sit and watch the performance; but the guests are ready at every moment to exchange the role of spectators for that of performers. There exist special *ena gbarifudi* dances, performed at these occasions: they consist of a slow, graceful forward-and-backward movement of a row of dancers, five or six young men, who dance side by side, the arms stretched out and the body bent slightly forward, setting their feet in small, measured, steps. Group follows group in the dancing arena. Individual dancers leap into the 'arena', and perform a short solo or

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

pas de deux of leaps and cart-wheels which, when executed skilfully, will be greeted with applause or, when less successful, with good-natured laughter and banter. There are special drum-signals for every higher *ena* rank which are sounded when the young men take the scene and join in the dance. Rich age-grade associations, or certain high rank-holders in the association, even have special dances and songs composed for them, which are played, not only at these meetings of the *ena*, but also whenever the *ena* members appear elsewhere at a public gathering. Drummers and woman dancer would walk up to the young man, and the dancer would recite the song which she composed in his honour.

> Moonlight makes all things good to look at.
> The *maba* bids the townsfolk farewell for the night.
> Give us of thy knowledge,
> Ibrahim Ganleyi,
> Thou grandson of wealth.[1]

Drum-signals and songs are not the only symbols of age-grade status. At every such festivity one of the drummers or some self-appointed 'master of ceremonies' will assume the role of an announcer. He is called *maba*; announcer and jester in one, he must be witty and have the gift of the gab. He collects the small gifts of money which guests make to drummers and dancers; he announces the name and rank of the donor and recites the virtues of his ancestors and famous relations (impressiveness counting more than truthfulness), adding such praises or witticisms as seem appropriate to the rank of the donor and the amount of the gift. We see again how closely Bida age-grade etiquette follows its model—the Nupe nobility; it copies every detail of its symbols of status and wealth, even such features as the specific interpretation of dignity forbidding persons of high rank to join in the common dance.

It is easily understood that in the village, along with the model, the copy must be absent also. At the gatherings of the village *ena* professional dancers and musicians are rarely summoned. There is no *maba* and no extolling the feats and virtues of celebrated ancestors. Age-grades and age-grade ranks 'own' their special drum-signals and dances; but they are associated with the group, and not with certain individuals who can afford to pay for the distinction.

The religious events in which age-grade associations participate concern all grades. In the pagan ceremony especially the different grades are allotted different tasks, which imply in varying measure admission to the esoteric ritual activities. The main religious ceremony of pagan Nupe, the *gunnu*, makes the *ena* members the protagonists of its ritual drama and dances. Another ceremony, which occurs only in the Benu

[1] This song, which was composed by the *saworo* group of dancers (see p. 302), in the honour of the young man called Ibrahim Ganleyi, was recorded at an age-grade feast in the house of a well-known Bida Mallam. It begins in the fashion of all Nupe songs with the quotation of a well-known proverb. The term *maba* which occurs in the second line is explained in the description that follows.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

full-scale performance, while in the remaining cases there is a mere suggestion of the ritual.

This association of two fixed rituals with the funerary ceremonial presents several puzzling features. To begin with, the distribution of the two rituals among the thirteen ranks of Jebba is strikingly uneven, ten ranks being linked with the *gunnu* and only three with the *dzakó*. This, I was told, was not always so; but a more even distribution was upset in the course of time, when certain ranks originally linked with the *dzakó* were allowed to lapse because at the death of the incumbents there happened to be no suitable successors. This may be so; during my stay in Jebba, for example, three minor ranks of the *dzakó* group (not counted among the thirteen) were in fact vacant, and several more may have completely disappeared. Even so, the fact remains that no attempt was made to even out the inequality, though this would present no difficulty in this non-hereditary rank system. Furthermore, the dual division on the grounds of the suitable funerary ceremonial extends, not only to the men holding the respective ranks, but to their whole 'house' (i.e. lineage); thus the Jebba people generally class any individual or family as belonging either to the *gunnuciži* or *dzakociži* (the '*gunnu* people' or the '*dzakó* people'). This fits in oddly with a rank system based mainly on election and promotion; for it would imply that whole kin groups might have to change their religious affiliation if their titled head is promoted from a rank belonging to one section to a rank belonging to the other, or if a new family head is elected to a rank, say, of the *dzakó* group while his predecessor belonged to the *gunnu* section. Such promotions and elections do in fact occur and, as might be expected, entail considerable confusion. Most puzzling of all, this comprehensive division of the population into ritual moieties seems to have no relevant consequences, religious or otherwise. At least, the only consequence ascribed to it is both incongruous and obscure. It was claimed by most informants that the sons of *gunnuci* families alone were formerly allowed to join in the esoteric part of the *gunnu*, while no such rule applied to the *dzakó*.[1] One informant, an old man of high rank belonging to the *dzakó* section, maintained that that ritual was similarly exclusive. Since the rule concerning the *gunnu* is no longer in force (if it ever existed), it was impossible to verify the respective information; the *dzakó* ceremonial I witnessed certainly failed to

[1] If this were true it would obviously mean that boys and young men originally admitted to the secret part of the *gunnu* might be excluded from it when their family head changed his rank, or that boys not previously admitted might suddenly acquire the necessary qualifications. Either contingency is difficult to credit.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
FF52 Nupe FF52

substantiate the other 'theory'. Indeed, I suspect that it is mere 796x
'theory'—an attempt to lend neatness and logic to an uncon- 766
vincing and haphazard division.

It should perhaps be added that there is no trace in Jebba of an 616
original ethnic division of the kind which, in other Nupe com- 554 ●
munities, accounts for the divided 'ownership' of particular [184]
rituals. Nor does the situation elsewhere in Nupe furnish any clue. The association of rituals with the funeral ceremonial for elders occurs, so far as I can judge, only in the river valley. But the puzzling dual division does not occur outside Jebba. In Bele, a small village up-river belonging to the same sub-tribe, Gbedegi, the two main local rituals, *gunnu* and *žiba*, are performed together at the death of all elders. In Mokwa, another Gbedegi town, a short distance from the river, the majority of rankholders are given a *gunnu* funeral; at the death of the *Sheshi* (the hereditary 'king-maker') his 'own' ritual is performed, and at the death of the *Samaza* (a non-hereditary rank), the masked ceremonial *elo*, which is in the charge of that elder. In neither case are the two men or their families excluded from the *gunnu*. Thus, as regards the Jebba version of that custom, I can only conclude that it represents an isolated attempt, neither thorough nor ultimately successful, to divide two of the main rituals evenly among the community. And this seems consistent with the general predilection of the Nupe for dichotomous arrangements.

(ii) *Movable Rituals*

A novel characteristic of these rites in Jebba is that they can be 796x
performed also at the request of individuals, even of strangers and non-Nupe, who wish to invoke the powerful 'magic' of the island or have been advised by diviners to do so. Indeed, the movable rituals are meant to benefit a much larger population, that is, all the groups living on the river. The *ketsá* sacrifice, more particularly, has made Jebba Island almost a place of pilgrimage.

The man in charge of the *ketsá* is called *Ndádoro*, 'Father of *doro*' (which is another name for the ritual). A priest in the strict sense of the word, like the *Ndazo*, he also walks about bareheaded and always wears 'ritual' dress. The *Ndádoro* I knew was old and blind, so that his actual duties fell to his son and future successor, though the father would still lend his presence and authority to the ritual performance.

There is a story connected with the origin of the ritual. Once a 796x
disastrous flood of the Niger destroyed all houses and farms and 773
brought famine to the river valley. The *Kuta* at Muregi, the chief of the 'Downstream Kede', had learned from Tsoede how to combat floods and prevent their recurrence. Following this advice, the

438 241 Plants important for trade and in native industry include cotton, henna (*lali*), and hemp, both introduced from Hausa country, and gourds. The by-products of agriculture, such as grain stalks, are used by the cultivator and his family for making fences, beds, and mats; sorghum stalks yield black and red vegetable dyes. Occasionally large non-fruit-bearing trees are cut down and sold to carpenters.[11]

Organization and Division of Labour

241 476 A two-fold principle of collective family work (*efakó*) and individual work (*bucá*) applies to farm labour, and to its products, income, and granaries. Each male member of the household owns a *bucá* farm, while all work on the *efakó* farm, the produce of which is stored in the *efakó* granaries, the head controlling the disposal. Sometimes forms of productive labour other than farm work are organized according to the *efakó* system, e.g., indigo-dyeing at Mokwa.

All those who share in the *efakó* group work are housed, clothed, and fed, and have their tax and marriage payments met by the household head, who also supplies tools and pays for their repair. Personal requirements beyond this are paid for from the proceeds of the *bucá* work. The present tendency is for large *efakó* groups to disintegrate on the death of the household head, the members of the group demanding a larger measure of freedom than the *efakó* system provides.

Mutual assistance and large-scale collective labour is of two types: *egbe*, for *efakó* farm work (mainly tilling and weeding), and for work for the community as a whole, e.g., building or roofing of a chief's house, repair of a bush bridge or road or of a town wall or the N.A. rest-house, etc. *Egbe* farm work is, on the whole, performed by younger people, often members of one or more of the age-set associations; it is accompanied by drummers and musicians and concludes with a feast. Help is generally enlisted for tilling and for the first and second weeding, and *egbe* is performed first and on the largest scale on the chief's farm.

The second type of mutual assistance—*dzolo*—is less important. It is an arrangement among a number of farmers to work on each other's farms in turn, usually for the harvesting of groundnuts, cotton, and beans.

464 Wage labour (*kantsú*; Hausa, *lada*) plays an insignificant part in Nupe production. It is found only in large commercial centres, such as Kacha and Jebba, and in Bida for temporary employment only.

462 Women do practically no farm work, but they undertake the processing of agricultural produce for market and the actual marketing, and the exploitation of the shea-nut tree is entirely in the hands of women.[12]

Floor-beating is an important women's task and is made something of a ceremony. While the old women pour water on to it the young women beat the floor with wooden beaters wrapped in rugs in time to the rhythm of drums.[13]

Livestock

231 422 Cattle are of minor importance in Nupe economy. They are owned only by butchers who buy from Bornu and Fulani traders. The cattle are of the northern humped breed and are not immune from trypanosomiasis. Sheep are rarely kept for breeding but are fattened and sold.

262 492 554 No pigs are kept and no pork is eaten.[14] Every household keeps chickens which are bought and sold regularly in the food markets of all the larger villages. Eggs are not marketed and are eaten only rarely in Nupe country. Donkeys are kept as transport animals. Horses (mainly in Bida) are a symbol of high rank and status.[15]

[11] Nadel, 1942, pp. 59, 236–7, 238, 205–14; Line, 1947: Temple 1919, p. 236.
[12] Nadel, 1942, pp. 241–56.
[13] Malam Aliyu Bida, notes, ed. P. G. Harris.
[14] Pigs were reported in Sharagi (Share) in 1918 and Pategi in 1912 (Notes by Biscoe and Badgen).
[15] Nadel, 1942, pp. 201–4.

643 The ndakó gboyá cult for
[75H] the detection and killing of witches might not be performed in or near the town in which the *Etsu* was living, nor might anyone be put to death there. All these features, together with the ancient rule of inheritance whereby the first son born during his father's reign as *Etsu* became the heir, have disappeared, while a new background of respect for the memory of Mallam Dendo,[5] the first of the Fulani rulers of Nupe, has been created. What was once probably a divine kingship has been replaced by a system of rule by the militarily strong and the king has become *primus inter pares* among the hierarchy of rank holders.

643 The three dynasties stemming from Mallam Dendo to-day succeed to the throne
633 in strict rotation. The *Etsu* is the head of the reigning house, the *Shaba*[6] (" heir-presumptive ") the head of the dynasty next in succession, and the *Kpotuŋ* the head of the third house. Bida town is divided into three sections (*eka*) each bearing the name of one of the royal dynasties and each having its own royal palace. The country around is similarly divided into three parts.

643 Every *Etsu* Nupe has sought during his reign to increase the power and wealth of his house. Former sources of income were the royal monopoly of the kola-nut trade,[7] the control of the *ndakó gboyá* anti-witchcraft society, and profits from the royal estates and from the slave trade. To-day, apart from his salary, the *Etsu* receives only profits from the royal estates and from occasional trading.

Status and Titles[8]

565 There are marked status differences in Nupe society and many symbols of social
554 distinction, such as the wearing of an indigo-blue glazed turban by the nobility, ways of greeting equals and superiors, the giving of kola-nuts (the number and quality reflecting precisely the social status of the donor and recipient), and the right to go about on horseback. Families and lineages appear to fall into class divisions according to the status in the system of ranked titles ascribed to or achieved by some of their members. While each class is, in the main, a closed group, there are opportunities for promotion within the higher classes and also some inter-class nobility, whereby entry into the higher orders may be obtained through wealth, war service, marriage, or " clientship."[9] Social ascent is controlled and marked by the hierarchy of titles. Within a grade of titles promotion to a higher title entails a reshuffle among the holders of the lower titles.

565 Of the three classes, the first, *waci* or *gitsúži* (the royal nobility) consists of the descendants of Mallam Dendo in three royal houses, Usman Zaki, Masaba, and Umaru, under their heads, *Etsu*, *Shaba*, and *Kpotuŋ*. This class is detached in origin and status from the rest of the community on account of the part it played in the wars and its position as royal fief-holders (*egba*)[10] in charge of large districts of the kingdom. The new king is elected from the *gitsúži*, every title-holder in which has in principle a chance of becoming king, though the royal prince who succeeds to the throne will generally have attained the rank of *Shaba*.[11] As well as the reshuffle of personnel holding the various titles which takes place on the death of a high title-holder and the subsequent appointment of his successor, there is a large-scale exchange of residences, younger brothers or sons moving into houses vacated by the death or promotion of their older brothers or fathers, for the residences of

[5] See above, p. 22.

[6] This office has been allowed to lapse since 1935 and the main functions have devolved upon the next in rank.

[7] i.e., the best kola-nuts grown at Labozhi.

[8] Nadel, 1942, pp. 93–103.

[9] See below, p. 35.

[10] See below, p. 36.

[11] Nadel states that only twice was a man who had not acquired the title of *Shaba* (or *Kpotuŋ* if the *Shaba* had died) made *Etsu*. Of the 41 royal titles held in 1936, 10 were held by Usman Zaki, 17 by Masaba, and 14 by Umaru, the ruling house at that time. See Nadel, 1942, pp. 95–7, for a detailed list of titles held by the various houses in 1936. Apparently new titles are often introduced.

the highest *gitsú* ranks go with the title. First appointment to a title and promotion to a higher one are granted by the king in council with the royal princes and other officers of state. Any able-bodied man of senior age, proved loyalty, and ability, and good health, of the Fulani families, is eligible for admission to a *gitsúži* title, but favouritism, intrigue, and bribery also play a part, and the titles which a family has been able to accumulate are an indication of its influence at court and its favour with the ruling king. When a title-holder becomes incapable, through age or illness, of fulfilling his duties, a younger man is appointed, the former holder being styled "old *Kpotuŋ*" or whatever the title may be. Nobody with any kind of deformity can hold a title, since the system was originally based on service in war and offices vital to the safety of the state. Investiture takes place in the *Etsu*'s house, in the presence of the *Alkali* or *Liman*, a propitious day having first been selected by mallams or diviners. The candidate is addressed by the *Etsu*, then clothed in a cloak and embroidered gown by the *Alkali* who also places a turban on his head. After prayers in which all join, the new holder rides through the town accompanied by other title-holders, and dismounts to greet princes or heads of houses at their residences.

The second class is that to which the *ticiži* or *rowni* (office-holding nobility) belong. The name *rowni* means "turbans" and refers to the fact that the bestowal of such a title is symbolized by the gift of a turban from the king. There are three groups of *ticiži*, each of which is regarded as a sharply defined social order: the *sarakiži*, the *ena manži*, and the *ena wuži*. The *sarakiži* is a group of civil and military nobility consisting of town elders (*ena ndeji*) and war leaders (*ena 'kuŋ*). The second order, *ena manži*, comprises the mallams, the religious and judicial officials, such as the *Alkali* (judge), and the *Liman* (religious head), with their assistants and scribes. The third order, *ena wuži*, which is the lowest in rank but still possesses great influence, consists of the court slaves.

Many of the *saraki* titles are identical in name with those bestowed on the village elders, but the symbols of status, even when similar, refer to very different social contexts. *Saraki* titles are, like *gitsú* titles, generally granted by the *Etsu* in council with princes and other officers of state. Theoretically, at least, outsiders, even commoners, who have won his favour may be admitted to the ranks. Only a few of the higher titles, which have become the prerogatives of certain families, are hereditary. Several titles cannot be accumulated in a single family. They are bestowed exclusively on one member of the family group; no other close relative can then claim a title or office in addition to the one already bestowed on his "house." To-day wealth and financial influence are important factors in gaining titles and the *saraki* group includes rich traders, as well as descendants of the old official nobility of pre-Fulani Nupe, and Nupe families who became partisans of the Fulani conquerors. These *sarakiži* received no salary, but were formerly granted land and slaves.

The *Ndeji* ("father of the town"), the head of the *ena ndeji*, is in charge of the affairs of Bida and the most powerful of the officers of state because he is closest to the king. At the head of the other civil title-holders he holds the daily council (*nkó*) with the king himself. The military titles (*ena 'kuŋ*) were formerly those of war leaders, the different titles being associated with special responsibilities.

The *ena manži*, the order of mallams, is "a class between classes, a mobile privileged intelligentsia." It includes the *Alkali*, the *Liman*, and their assistants. The detailed knowledge of Moslem law and literature and the specialized training required limits the number of candidates. But the offices of *Liman* and *Alkali* are sometimes hereditary, reflecting a tradition of learning in certain families, and political influence, for many eminent mallams are of Fulani stock. Mallams are highly esteemed by everyone and are placed about commoners even when they are without rank or title and have only little learning. They are allowed to marry daughters and sisters of higher born families.

SLAVERY

567 Slaves attached to the royal house and the nobility could rise to positions of wealth and influence, and some of the former titled court slaves have in recent times become Native Authority officials. Slaves had a certain measure of social and economic independence; though female slaves had no income and their earnings belonged to their master, they might become the concubines of a free man and be given their freedom. Any children born would in any case be free. Male slaves could seek to purchase their independence.

Slaves were obtained both by capture in war and by purchase in the Bida market. Owners had the power of life and death over slaves, though in practice they rarely maltreated them. Indeed, when slavery was abolished, many former slaves elected to remain as unpaid servants with their former masters. Children born to a man's slaves were called *mangi* (" children of the house ") and could not be sold, maltreated, or killed. They were brought up as members of the household but were not entitled to a share in the master's inheritance. A master would, however, provide the marriage payment for a marriage arranged by him for one of his slaves with another slave.[33]

PAWNING

426 558 The practice of pawning human pledges grew to enormous proportions before its final suppression in 1933–34. Under the pressure of unexpected or imperative demands, one person in a family, preferably a male, would be pawned for 5–10 years. Pawning was regarded as a disgrace and the pawns were looked down on by their masters and even by the household slaves.[34]

POSITION OF WOMEN

562 Women's activities, other than household tasks, include spinning, weaving, cooking cakes for sale in the market, and hairdressing (a lucrative profession). Women are also doctors and traders, though those whose professional duties keep them away from home for long periods are commonly regarded as " loose " women. They collect the produce of all trees except palm-oil and kola; they cultivate and sell groundnuts and root crops and help to trade some of the men's crops.

A woman's earnings as a trader cannot be touched by her husband, but remain her property until her death, when he inherits them. Among commoners a woman is often better-off than her husband and may lend him money for taxes and the purchase of tools, and even provide for marriages and funerals. The inter-sex hostility, which has been accentuated by the economic independence and consequent sexual freedom of women, also shows itself in the Nupe conception of witchcraft, where a witch is thought to do mystically what a woman actually does in everyday life.[35]

562 565 The most important women's titles are those of *nimwoye*, of the royal house of Masaba, and *sagi*, of the royal houses of Umaru and Usman Zaki alternatively. Quarrels between women are brought before women holding these titles and the women of Bida town and the villages bring them gifts. *Sagi* is also the title of the " head of the women " in every Nupe village. The chief woman commoner in Bida has the title of *sonya;* she organizes all large-scale women's work and is entrusted with the supervision of the market. She is now an official of the Native Administration, receiving a small salary. The status of a woman by descent is not 554 reduced on marriage, since Nupe class sentiments cannot admit a lowering of the status of anyone high-born.[36]

[33] Nadel, 1942, pp. 103–8, 157.
[34] Ibid., pp. 311–13.
[35] Nadel, 1954a, pp. 172–81.
[36] Nadel, 1942, pp. 331–4, 147–58; Temple, 1919, p. 326.

5: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1947
FF52 Nupe FF52
Kede

factional splits within the hereditary ruling class. The recent history of the Kede contains indeed evidence of such rivalry between the Kede chief and his officers of State, or between different claimants to Kede rulership, and the ensuing division of the country into rival factions.[1] Attachment to one of the rival factions is also the only means by which the subject classes, the commoners with no rank and office, could exercise an indirect influence upon the political management of their country.

Administration of the 'Colonies'. The following chart illustrates the different grades in the rank list of Kede delegates. The ranks are given in order of precedence, each rank together with the district to which its holder is posted. The last five ranks on the list do not belong to members of the chief's family, but to that group of 'household' ranks which are also occasionally vested with emissaryships.

Rank	*Relation to Kuta*	*Posted to at present*	*Posted to formerly*
Egba	Elder brother's son (classific.)	Gbara	Kpatagban (right bank)
Sonfara	Son	Lives in Muregi, no emissaryship	(A newly introduced rank)
Kofiē	Younger brother (classific.)	Raba	Raba
Ekpā	Younger brother (classific.)	Kpacefu	—
Twadiya	Younger brother	Ketsogi	Ketsogi
Lefiti	Younger brother of *Egba*	Muregi, no emissaryship	Kpacefu
Liman Gyedwa	Distant relation	„	Kpasha (right bank)
Twadyagi	„	„	Kpasha

[1] Factional splits of this kind were occasionally utilized and fostered by outside Powers. Thus the Royal Niger Company supported an *Egba* in whom they found a valuable ally against the ruling *Kuta*, promising the former the chieftainship in return for the support of his faction. And once or twice the Emirs of Nupe backed the rival claimant of Kede chieftainship against the 'official' candidate.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922

FF52 Nupe FF52

557 as far east as Awtun (Ekiti), and from Yagba District to Ilorin.
588 *"A wealthy woman trader would sometimes go through the
851 form of marriage with one or more young women—reputed virgins.
425 These 'wives' she would send out to various neighbouring villages, ostensibly trading. When, in the expected course of events, these 'wives' formed illicit attachments, a careful note was made of the resultant progeny. When the children had reached five or six years, or more, they were claimed by the woman 'husband' as her children, based on the legal fiction of all legal wives' children being the children of the legal 'father.' In almost every case, the real father compounded with the legal 'father,' in the customary value of the child. The profit to the woman capitalist was exceedingly great.

557 - "This custom is not confined to the pagan, nor to the female
586 sex. Many a reputed Mussulman (Bida-Pategi) will allow his
851 wife to go on three and four years' trading expeditions, fully
425 cognisant of the inevitable results. In due time he will apply for the custody of the children, which are legally his until his wife has sued for and obtained a legal divorce, which last is seldom done, owing (in Nupe and Ilorin generally) to the high 'dowry' money claimed. If the case is settled out of Court, the husband enjoys substantial profits. On the other hand, if the wife and children return to him, which is seldom nowadays, he can always obtain a respectable 'dower' from the suitors to the girl children. As to the boys, he finds every use for them on his farm."

595 The first wife is the head one, and advises the other women on all household and commercial matters, and they have to apply to her for permission to leave the compound. Each wife has her own hut, but all the women have their meals together, when they sit round the pot in a circle, in strict order of precedence, counting from the right hand of the first wife. Next her is the second wife, next her the third wife, next her the fourth wife, then come their daughters and foster-daughters in order of age, dependants and slaves. The first wife helps herself and passes the pot round
554 the table, hands only being used—she alone may sit upright, while the others are obliged to crouch in her presence.

264 There are three meals in the day, at 7 a.m, mid-day, and sun-
262 down, each meal consisting of one dish only. For breakfast they have "fura," a sort of porridge, with cow's milk where it is obtainable,
272 (The Nupe will not drink goat's milk, though they eat its flesh.) At noon the poorer people have porridge again, the well-to-do have guinea-corn, or rice, mixed with soup. Supper is the principal meal, when soup is made with guinea-corn or rice, and any meat or fish that may be available.

* Mr. E. C. Duff.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
FF52 Nupe FF52

875 sometimes consult a book before speaking; if it concerns anyone
787 who is absent and unknown to the Mallam, the questioner lays his hand on the ground, at which the Mallam gazes.

In the case of illness the Is-sabi is consulted, as if death is certain it would be mere waste to spend money on doctors and on medicine, as is otherwise done.

759 Some doctors have acquired great reputations, and people travel long distances to consult them. As they are not paid unless they effect a cure, they will not undertake hopeless cases.

764 When a man dies he is buried in the compound in a rectangular-
766 shaped grave, which has three depths, one within the other. The body, which is wrapped in a large new cloth, is laid on a mat on one side in the deepest part, the centre, facing eastwards; wood is placed over it to prevent the earth touching the corpse.
● [554] Some of the more important men have a special burial-room in their compound, but with this exception it is the same for men, women, and children. Those who die of small-pox or who commit suicide are, however, taken out and thrown into the bush by dogarai, for no one else will touch them. If a body is being carried home it may never be laid down, so a large number
[187] of bearers are provided to relieve one another. The pagan Nupe pour beer upon the grave, and offer prayers to the spirits.*

765 For seven days after a death the brothers, sons, daughters, and other near relations and friends, come and sit with the bereaved principal from six in the morning till six in the evening. Dirty white clothes constitute mourning apparel, and this is worn for children, parents and spouse.

765 A widower may go out after seven days and work a little,
768 but not much till forty days have elapsed, when he may resume his ordinary habits, though he continues to wear white for five months. Widows, however, remain shut up in the compound for five months, during which time they may not dress their hair, or remove their sandals, or see any man. This over they remarry, and can exercise their own choice as to a groom, being allowed forty days within which to make their arrangements. By the end of this time the law of the country insists on marriage, an old woman getting an old husband, for no one will bury an unmarried woman and, of course, she has no home where she has a right to lie. It is a terror to the widows during their enforced five months of singleness lest they may fall ill or die, for even sickness, following so hard on the tragedy of death, would be considered a sign of evil, and possibly witch-dom, so the woman would find difficulty in securing another husband.

768 The heirs are responsible for all debts incurred by the deceased, whose property is divided between his eldest son, his other

* Sapke and Mokwa.

5: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1947
FF52 Nupe FF52
Kede

Rank	*Relation to Kuta*	*Posted to at present*	*Posted to formerly*
Sodi	Younger brother	Katcha (unofficially)	Muregi, no emissaryship
Sheshi Kuta	Household-rank	Katcha	Eggan (right bank)
Tsowa Kuta	"	Muregi, no emissaryship	Egbagi (right bank)
Capa Kuta	"	"	Wunangi
Mijindadi Kuta	"	Jebba	Buka

The list shows that the assignment of posts to political ranks has undergone certain changes. They were due partly to the re-alignment of modern administrative divisions, which placed some of the former Kede areas outside of present-day Kede country (e.g. the Kede settlements on the right bank of the Niger). But partly also to changes in the economic and political importance of certain places and the corresponding change in their official 'appreciation'. Jebba and Katcha are illuminating examples. In Jebba we find a man of comparatively low rank in charge of the Kede community. He was posted there when Jebba was only just beginning to become the important place it is to-day. The *Mijindadi* is to-day a very old man, almost blind, and only nominally in charge of the 'colony'; he is generally expected to be succeeded by a high rank-holder whose rank would do justice to the importance of present-day Jebba. Katcha is, officially, in charge of the *Sheshi Kuta*, another 'household' rank; he is, however, unofficially assisted in his work by the *Sodi*, a relation of the *Kuta*, who also lives in Katcha and, in fact, only waits till this important Kede community will be handed to him as to the more suitable representative of the *Kuta*.

The dominion of the delegate varies in extent and composition. His district (especially if he resides in one of the twin-villages) may comprise both tribal groups, Kede and non-Kede; or the boundary of his dominion may be drawn round the Kede settlement, while the 'native' village (which would be some distance from the Kede settlement or on the bank if the latter is on an island) belongs to the country and political district inland. In